# TRANSLATIONS FROM OLD ENGLISH PROSE

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PROPERTY OF
COLBY SCHOOL FOR GIRLS

# SELECT TRANSLATIONS FROM OLD ENGLISH PROSE

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*Antiquam exquirite matrem*

GINN AND COMPANY

BOSTON · NEW YORK · CHICAGO · LONDON

ATLANTA · DALLAS · COLUMBUS · SAN FRANCISCO

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830.10

The Athenæum Press
GINN AND COMPANY · PROPRIETORS · BOSTON · U.S.A.

# PREFACE

The reception accorded to our *Select Translations from Old English Poetry* has encouraged us to believe that a companion volume from Old English prose might be welcome. While primarily intended for the student of literature, it will be found to contain matter of scarcely less interest to the student of history, and especially of what the Germans call the history of culture.

A preliminary examination of the writings of the period, with reference to a provisional selection of passages for the work, was made, at the suggestion of the senior editor, by Miss Mary W. Smyth and Miss Elizabeth W. Manwaring, both of whom are represented in the volume by translations; but the eventual decision was made by ourselves.

Some justification may be necessary for including translations from Latin, as well as from Old English. In the first place, works like the *Ecclesiastical History* and the *Pastoral Care* were originally composed in Latin, and this Latin can hardly be ignored in making translations into modern English; while most other prose writings of the period are colored by Latin influence. In the second place, an author like Alcuin is essentially English, though none of his extant writings are in that tongue, and though much of his life was passed on the Continent. Finally, portions of the Benedictine Rule are included, because of its profound and extensive influence upon men's minds in that age, and because it, too, was translated and glossed in the Old English period.

Our thanks are due to those translators — all of them graduate students of English at Yale in the past or present — who have willingly collaborated with us. It became more and more evident, as we proceeded, that the older versions, such as those of Giles, are too inaccurate to be reproduced without modification; our only regret on this point is that new translations were not made in all such cases.

We should be glad if this book might do something to extend and deepen the interest in the words and works of those who toiled, a millennium or more ago, that England and the world might live; and we could even wish that it might suggest a closer conformity to their simplicity, courage, and devotion to the things of the spirit.

YALE UNIVERSITY
November 15, 1907

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# I

# WORKS MAINLY HISTORICAL

# SELECTIONS FROM BEDE'S *ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE*

The chief source of our knowledge of the life of Bede is his own account of himself at the close of his *Ecclesiastical History:* 'I, Bede, the servant of God, and priest of the monastery of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, which is at Wearmouth and Jarrow, being born in the territory of that same monastery, was given at seven years of age to be educated by the most reverend Abbot Benedict, and afterwards by Ceolfrith; and spending all the remaining time of my life in that monastery, I wholly applied myself to the study of Scripture, and, amidst the observance of regular discipline, and the daily care of singing in the church, I always took delight in learning, teaching, and writing.[1] In the nineteenth year of my age, I received deacon's orders; in the thirtieth, those of the priesthood — both of them by the ministry of the most reverend Bishop John, and by order of the Abbot Ceolfrith. From which time till this fifty-ninth year of my age, I have made it my business, for the use of me and mine, to compile out of the works of the venerable Fathers, and to interpret and explain according to their meaning, these following pieces.' [A list of his works follows.] Bede apparently spent his entire youth and manhood at Jarrow, though it is not impossible that this quiet life was interrupted by a journey to Rome. For the story of his death, which probably occurred May 26, 735, see pp. 255 ff. An excellent account of him may be found in Plummer's edition of the *Ecclesiastical History* 1. ix–lxxix.

Benedict Biscop (? 628–690. Cf. pp. 243 ff.), above referred to, is noted as the founder and systematic governor of the Benedictine monasteries at Wearmouth (founded 674) and Jarrow (founded 682). He endowed these with an excellent library of patristic literature, much of which he had himself bought at Rome, and in the days of Bede Jarrow became one of the chief seats of learning in all Europe. It has been often pointed out that its

[1] See Wordsworth, *Eccl. Sonnets* 23.

situation contributed to produce its fame, for it sustained relations more or less intimate with the Celtic church in Northumbria, with the Gallic church, and with Canterbury (whence Bede may have obtained his acquaintance with the Greek language). Bede became the principal scholar of Jarrow, and through his influence the famous School of York was founded by Egbert, one of his pupils. At York the works of Bede were studied not only by English, but by Continental pupils. Finally by Alcuin (see pp. 260 ff.) their influence was transferred to the court-schools of Charlemagne.

The list of Bede's complete works is surprisingly large, including commentaries on the various books of the Old and New Testaments, homilies, lives of saints and abbots, a translation of the Gospel of St. John (now lost), sundry scientific works, and a history of the world, *De Sex Ætatibus Sæculi*. The complete works of Bede may be consulted not only in Migne's *Patrologia Latina* (Vols. 90–95, Paris, 1844), but also in the edition of J. A. Giles, London, 1843–44.

*The Ecclesiastical History of the English People* is the most famous of Bede's works. It is divided into five books. The earlier chapters, descriptive of England and its history before the coming of Augustine, are based on previous Latin works, such as those of Orosius (see pp. 108 ff.), Eutropius, and Gildas. From 1. 23 on, the sources are more independent. Bede drew much from local annals, oral and written communication, and personal recollection. A tendency to sift evidence is noticeable here and there (cf. pp. 5 ff., 43, 64). The history closes with the year 731.

A translation of Bede's *History* into Old English was made by King Alfred, or by scholars working under his direction. For theories concerning its authorship, see Miller's edition (London, 1890–91), and Plummer's *Life and Times of Alfred the Great* (Oxford, 1902), chap. 6.

The original Latin text may be consulted in Plummer's edition (Oxford, 1896). An excellent edition of Books 3 and 4 has been made by Mayor and Lumby (3d ed., Cambridge, 1881). Moberly's edition (Oxford, 1869) is also valuable. Still worthy of honor is the splendid folio edition of Smith (Cambridge, 1722), containing both the Latin and the Old English, besides other historical works of Bede.

## 1. PREFACE

I formerly, at your request, most readily transmitted to you the *Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation*, which I had newly published, for you to read, and give it your approbation; and I now send it again to be transcribed, and more fully considered at your leisure.... But to the end that I may remove all occasion of doubting what I have written, both from yourself and other readers or hearers of this history, I will take care briefly to intimate from what authors I chiefly learned the same.

My principal authority and aid in this work was the learned and reverend Abbot Albinus; who, educated in the church of Canterbury by those venerable and learned men, Archbishop Theodore of blessed memory, and the Abbot Hadrian, transmitted to me by Nothelm, the pious priest of the church of London, either in writing, or by word of mouth of the same Nothelm, all that he thought worthy of memory that had been done in the province of Kent or the adjacent parts by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, as he had learned the same either from written records or the traditions of his ancestors. The same Nothelm, afterwards going to Rome, having, with leave of the present Pope Gregory, searched into the archives of the holy Roman church, found there some epistles of the blessed Pope Gregory and other popes; and returning home, by the advice of the aforesaid most reverend father Albinus brought them to me, to be inserted in my history. Thus, from the beginning of this volume to the time when the English nation received the faith of Christ, have we collected the writings of our predecessors, and from them gathered matter for our history; but from that time till the present, what was transacted in the

church of Canterbury by the disciples of St. Gregory or their successors, and under what kings the same happened, has been conveyed to us by Nothelm through the industry of the aforesaid Abbot Albinus. They also partly informed me by what bishops and under what kings the provinces of the East and West Saxons, as also of the East Angles, and of the Northumbrians, received the faith of Christ. In short, I was chiefly encouraged to undertake this work by the persuasions of the same Albinus. In like manner, Daniel, the most reverend bishop of the West Saxons, who is still living, communicated to me in writing some things relating to the ecclesiastical history of that province, and of the South Saxons, next adjoining to it, as also of the Isle of Wight. But how, by the pious ministry of Cedd and Chad, the province of the Mercians was brought to the faith of Christ, which they knew not before, and how that of the East Saxons recovered the same after having expelled it, and how those fathers lived and died, we learned from the brethren of the monastery which was built by them, and is called Lastingham. What ecclesiastical transactions took place in the province of the East Angles was partly made known to us from the writings and tradition of our ancestors, and partly by relation of the most reverend Abbot Esi. What was done towards promoting the faith, and what was the sacerdotal succession in the province of Lindsey, we had either from the letters of the most reverend Bishop Cynibert, or by word of mouth from other persons of good credit. But what was done in the church throughout the province of the Northumbrians, from the time when they received the faith of Christ till this present, I received not from any particular author, but by the faithful testimony of innumerable witnesses, who might know or remember the same;

besides what I had of my own knowledge. Wherein it is to be observed that what I have written concerning our most holy father Bishop Cuthbert, either in this volume or in my treatise on his life and actions, I partly took and faithfully copied from what I found written of him by the brethren of the church of Lindisfarne; but at the same time took care to add such things as I could myself have knowledge of by the faithful testimony of such as knew him. And I humbly entreat the reader that if he shall in this that we have written find anything not delivered according to the truth, he will not impute the same to me, who, as the true rule of history requires, have labored sincerely to commit to writing such things as I could gather from common report, for the instruction of posterity.

## 2. BEDE'S DESCRIPTION OF BRITAIN AND IRELAND

Bk. 1, chap. 1

Britain, an island in the ocean, formerly called Albion, is situated between the north and west, facing, though at a considerable distance, the coasts of Germany, France, and Spain, which form the greatest part of Europe. It extends eight hundred miles in length towards the north, and is two hundred miles in breadth, except where several promontories extend further in breadth, by which its compass is made to be 4875 miles. . . .

The island excels in fruits and trees, and is well adapted for feeding cattle and beasts of burden. It also produces vines in some places, and has plenty of land- and water-fowl of various sorts; it is remarkable also for rivers abounding in fish, and plentiful springs. It has the greatest plenty of salmon and eels; seals are also frequently

taken, and dolphins, as also whales; besides many sorts of shell-fish, such as mussels, in which are often found excellent pearls[1] of all colors — red, purple, violet, and green — but mostly white. There is also a great abundance of cockles, of which the scarlet dye is made — a most beautiful color, which never fades with the heat of the sun or the washing of the rain; but the older it is, the more beautiful it becomes. It has both salt and hot springs, and from them flow rivers which furnish hot baths, proper for all ages and both sexes, and arranged in separate places, according as each person may prefer. For water, as St. Basil says,[2] receives the heating quality when it runs along certain metals, and becomes not only hot, but scalding. Britain has also many veins of metals, as copper, iron, lead, and silver;[3] it has much and excellent jet, which is black and burns when fire is applied to it; when heated, it drives away serpents; being warmed by rubbing, it holds fast whatever is applied to it, like amber. The island was formerly embellished with twenty-eight noble cities, besides innumerable castles, which were all strongly secured with walls, towers, gates, and locks.

From its lying almost under the North Pole, the nights are light in summer, so that at midnight the beholders are often in doubt whether the evening twilight still continues, or that of the morning is coming on;[3] for the sun, in the night, returns under the earth through the northern regions, at no great distance from them. For this reason the days are of a great length in summer, as, on the contrary, the nights are in winter, for the sun then withdraws into the southern parts, so that the nights are eighteen

[1] So Tacitus, Pliny, Solinus, Ælian.

[2] *Hexaem.* 4. 6, quoted from the Latin translation (cf. Migne, *Patr. Lat.* 53. 907).

[3] Cf. Tacitus, *Agric.* 12 (Plummer).

hours long. Thus the nights are extraordinarily short in summer, and the days in winter, that is, of only six equinoctial hours; whereas in Armenia, Macedonia, Italy, and other countries of the same latitude, the longest day or night extends but to fifteen hours, and the shortest to nine.

This island at present, following the number of the books in which the divine law was written, contains five languages — those of the English, Britons, Scots, Picts, and Latins — each examining and confessing one and the same knowledge of the highest truth and of true sublimity. The Latin tongue is, by the study of the Scriptures, become common to all the others.

At first this island had no other inhabitants but the Britons, from whom it derived its name, and who, coming over into Britain, as is reported, from Armorica, possessed themselves of the southern parts thereof. When they, beginning at the south, had made themselves masters of the greatest part of the island, it happened that the nation of the Picts — from Scythia,[1] as is reported — putting to sea in a few long ships, were driven by the winds beyond the shores of Britain, and arrived on the northern coast of Ireland, where finding the nation of the Scots, they begged to be allowed to settle among them, but could not succeed in obtaining their request.

Ireland is the greatest island next to Britain, and lies to the west of it; but as it is shorter than Britain to the north, so on the other hand it runs out far beyond it to the south, opposite to the northern parts of Spain,[2] though a spacious sea lies between them. The Picts, as has been said, arriving in this island by sea, desired to

[1] Namely Scandinavia, but the Picts were either a pre-Aryan race (Rhys, Plummer), or Celts of the Cymric rather than the Gaelic stock (Windisch, Stokes).

[2] Cf. Tacitus, *Agric.* 10.

have a place granted them in which they might settle. The Scots answered that the island could not contain them both; 'but we can give you good advice,' said they, 'what to do; we know there is another island, not far from ours to the eastward, which we often see at a distance when the days are clear. If you will go thither, you will obtain settlements; or if they should oppose you, you shall have our assistance.'

The Picts, accordingly, sailing over into Britain, began to inhabit the northern parts thereof, for the Britons were possessed of the southern. Now the Picts had no wives, and asked them of the Scots, who would not consent to grant them upon any other terms than that when any difficulty should arise, they should choose a king from the female royal race rather than from the male; which custom, as is well known, has been observed among the Picts to this day. In process of time, Britain, besides the Britons and the Picts, received a third nation, the Scots, who, migrating from Ireland under their leader Reuda, either by fair means or by force of arms secured to themselves those settlements among the Picts which they still possess. From the name of their commander, they are to this day called Dalreudins; for in their language Dal signifies a part.

Ireland, in breadth, and for wholesomeness and serenity of climate, far surpasses Britain, for the snow scarcely ever lies there above three days; no man makes hay in the summer for winter's provision, or builds stables for his beasts of burden. No reptiles are found there, and no snake can live there; for, though often carried thither out of Britain, as soon as the ship comes near the shore, and the scent of the air reaches them, they die. . . . The island abounds in milk and honey, nor is there any want

of vines, fish, or fowl; and it is remarkable for deer and goats. It is properly the country of the Scots, who, migrating from thence, as has been said, added a third nation in Britain to the Britons and the Picts. There is a very large gulf of the sea, which formerly divided the nation of the Picts from the Britons; which gulf[1] runs from the west very far into the land, where, to this day, stands the strong city of the Britons, called Alcluith.[2] The Scots, arriving on the north side of this bay, settled themselves there.

## 3. THE BRITONS SEND TO ROME FOR AID AGAINST THE PICTS AND SCOTS

Bk. 1, chap. 12[3]

From that time the south part of Britain, destitute of armed soldiers, of martial stores, and of all its active youth, who had been led away by the rashness of the tyrants, never to return, was wholly exposed to rapine, as being totally ignorant of the use of weapons. Whereupon they suffered many years under two very savage foreign nations, the Scots from the west, and the Picts from the north. . . .

On account of the irruption of these nations, the Britons sent messengers to Rome with letters in mournful manner, praying for succors, and promising perpetual subjection provided that the impending enemy should be driven away. An armed legion was immediately sent them, which, arriving in the island, and engaging the enemy, slew a great multitude of them, drove the rest out of the territories of their allies, and having delivered them from their cruel oppressors, advised them to build a wall between the two

[1] The Firth of Clyde. [2] Now Dumbarton.

[3] Largely from Gildas.

seas [1] across the island, that it might secure them, and keep off the enemy; and thus they returned home with great triumph. The islanders raising the wall, as they had been directed, not of stone — as having no engineer capable of such a work — but of sods, made it of no use. However, they drew it for many miles between the two bays or inlets of the sea which we have spoken of; to the end that where the defense of the water was wanting, they might use the rampart to defend their borders from the irruptions of the enemies. Of which work there erected, that is, a rampart of extraordinary breadth and height, there are evident remains to be seen at this day. It begins at about two miles' distance from the monastery of Abercurnig,[2] on the west, at a place called in the Pictish language Peanfahel, but in the English tongue Penneltun, and running to the westward, ends near the city of Alcluith.

But the former enemies, when they perceived that the Roman soldiers were gone, immediately coming by sea, broke into the borders, trampled and overran all places, and, like men mowing ripe corn, bore down all before them. Hereupon messengers were again sent [3] to Rome imploring aid, lest their wretched country should be utterly extirpated, and the name of a Roman province, so long renowned among them, should be overthrown by the cruelties of barbarous foreigners, and become utterly contemptible. A legion was accordingly sent again, and arriving unexpectedly in autumn,[4] made great slaughter of the enemy, obliging all those that could escape to flee beyond the sea; whereas before they were wont yearly to carry off their booty without any opposition. Then the Romans

[1] The Firth of Forth and the Firth of Clyde.
[2] Now Abercorn, not far from Edinburgh.
[3] Moberly thinks after 411.
[4] Bede has here taken literally a figurative expression of Gildas'.

declared to the Britons that they could not for the future undertake such troublesome expeditions for their sake, advising them rather to handle their weapons like men, and undertake themselves the charge of engaging their enemies, who would not prove too powerful for them unless they were deterred by cowardice; and, thinking that it might be some help to the allies whom they were forced to abandon, they built a strong stone wall [1] from sea to sea, in a straight line between the towns that had been there built for fear of the enemy, and not far from the trench of Severus.[2] This famous wall,[3] which is still to be seen, was built at the public and private expense, the Britons also lending their assistance. It is eight feet in breadth and twelve in height,[4] in a straight line from east to west, as is still visible to beholders. This being finished, they gave that dispirited people good advice, with patterns to furnish them with arms. Besides, they built towers on the seacoast to the southward, at proper distances, where their ships were, because there also the irruptions of the barbarians were apprehended, and so took leave of their friends, never to return again.[5]

After their departure, the Scots and Picts, understanding that they had declared they would come no more, speedily returned, and growing more confident than they had been before, occupied all the northern and farthest part of the island, as far as the wall. Hereupon a timorous guard was placed upon the wall, where they pined

[1] Readers of romance may be interested to compare Kipling, *Puck of Pook's Hill*, pp. 153–4.

[2] Rather of Hadrian (A.D. 120).

[3] From Wallsend, 4 miles N.E. of Newcastle, to Bowness, 12 miles N.W. of Carlisle (Moberly).

[4] 'In the portions which now remain it rarely exceeds five or six feet in height' (*Quart. Rev.* 107. 66).

[5] Probably 418 A.D. (Moberly).

away day and night in the utmost fear. On the other side, the enemy attacked them with hooked weapons, by which the cowardly defenders were dragged from the wall, and dashed against the ground. At last, the Britons, forsaking their cities and wall, took to flight and were dispersed. The enemy pursued, and the slaughter was greater than on any former occasion; for the wretched natives were torn in pieces by their enemies, as lambs are torn by wild beasts. Thus, being expelled their dwellings and possessions, they saved themselves from starvation by robbing and plundering one another, adding to the calamities occasioned by foreigners by their own domestic broils, till the whole country was left destitute of food, except such as could be procured in the chase.

### 4. THE COMING OF THE ENGLISH[1] (A.D. 450–456)

Bk. 1, chap. 15[2]

In the year of our Lord 449,[3] Martian being made Emperor with Valentinian — the forty-sixth from Augustus — ruled the empire seven years. Then the nation of the Angles, or Saxons, being invited by the aforesaid king,[4] arrived in Britain with three long ships, and had a place assigned them to reside in by the same king, in the eastern part of the island, that they might thus appear to be fighting for the country, while their real intentions were to enslave it. Accordingly they engaged with the enemy, who were come from the north to give battle, and obtained the victory; which being known at home in their own country, as also the fertility of the country

[1] Cf. Green, *The Making of England.*

[2] Chiefly from Gildas.

[3] Really 450.

[4] The legendary Vortigern; for Gerontius, his historical counterpart, see Plummer 2. 23.

and the cowardice of the Britons, a more considerable fleet was quickly sent over, bringing a still greater number of men, which, being added to the former, made up an invincible army. The newcomers received of the Britons a place to inhabit, upon condition that they should wage war against their enemies for the peace and security of the country, while the Britons agreed to furnish them with pay.

Those who came over were of the three most powerful nations of Germany — Saxons, Angles, and Jutes. From the Jutes are descended the people of Kent and of the Isle of Wight, and those also in the province of the West Saxons who are to this day called Jutes, seated opposite to the Isle of Wight. From the Saxons — that is, the country which is now called Old Saxony[1] — came the East Saxons, the South Saxons, and the West Saxons. From the Angles — that is, the country which is called Angulus,[2] and which is said to remain desert from that time to this day, between the provinces of the Jutes and the Saxons — are descended the East Angles, the Midland Angles, the Mercians, all the race of the Northumbrians, that is, of those nations that dwell on the north side of the river Humber, and the other nations of the Angles. The first two commanders are said to have been Hengist and Horsa; of whom Horsa, being afterwards slain in battle by the Britons, was buried in the eastern parts of Kent, where a monument bearing his name is still in existence. They were the sons of Wihtgils, son of Witta, son of Wecta, son of Woden; from whose stock the royal lines of many provinces deduce their original.

In a short time, swarms of the aforesaid nations came over into the island, and they began to increase so much

[1] Nearly the modern Holstein (Moberly).
[2] Approximately Schleswig.

that they became terrible to the natives themselves who had invited them. Then, having on a sudden entered into league with the Picts, whom they had by this time repelled by the force of their arms, they began to turn their weapons against their confederates. At first they obliged them to furnish a greater quantity of provisions; and, seeking an occasion to quarrel, protested that unless more plentiful supplies were brought them, they would break the confederacy, and ravage all the island; nor were they backward in putting their threats in execution. In short, the fire kindled by the hands of these heathen proved God's just revenge for the crimes of the people, not unlike that which, being once lighted by the Chaldeans, consumed the walls and city of Jerusalem.[1] For the barbarous conquerors acting here in the same manner, or rather the just Judge ordaining that they should so act, they plundered all the neighboring cities and country, spread the conflagration from the eastern to the western sea without any opposition, and covered almost every part of the devoted island. Public as well as private structures were overturned; the priests were everywhere slain before the altars; the prelates and the people, without any respect of persons, were destroyed with fire and sword; nor was there any to bury those who had been thus cruelly slaughtered. Some of the miserable remainder, being taken in the mountains, were butchered in heaps. Others, spent with hunger, came forth and submitted themselves to the enemy for food, being destined to undergo perpetual servitude, if they were not killed even upon the spot. Some, with sorrowful hearts, fled beyond the seas. Others, continuing in their own country, led a miserable life in fear and anxiety among the woods, rocks, and mountains.

[1] 2 Kings 25. 9, 10; Jer. 52. 13, 14.

## 5. A VICTORY FOR THE BRITONS

Bk. 1, chap. 16 [1]

When the victorious army, having destroyed and dispersed the natives, had returned home to their own settlements, the Britons began by degrees to take heart and gather strength, sallying out of the lurking-places where they had concealed themselves, and unanimously imploring the divine assistance, that they might not utterly be destroyed. They had at that time for their leader Ambrosius Aurelius, a modest man, who alone, by chance, of the Roman nation had survived the storm in which his parents, who were of the royal race, had perished. Under him the Britons revived, and offering battle to the victors, by the help of God came off victorious. From that day sometimes the natives, and sometimes their enemies prevailed, till the year [2] of the siege of Mount Badon, when they made no small slaughter of those invaders, about forty-four years after their arrival in England.

## 6. THE SENDING OF AUGUSTINE (A.D. 596)

Bk. 1, chap. 23

In the year of our Lord 582, Maurice, the fifty-fourth from Augustus, ascended the throne, and reigned twenty-one years. In the tenth year of his reign, Gregory, a man renowned for learning and behavior, was promoted to the apostolical see of Rome, and presided over it thirteen years, six months, and ten days. He, being moved by divine inspiration, in the fourteenth year of the same emperor, and about the one hundred and fiftieth after the coming of the English into Britain, sent the servant

[1] Condensed from Gildas.

[2] About 493 (Plummer).

of God, Augustine, and with him several other monks who feared the Lord, to preach the word of God to the English nation.

They having, in obedience to the pope's commands, undertaken that work, were seized on their journey with a sudden fear, and began to think of returning home rather than proceed to a barbarous, fierce, and unbelieving nation, to whose very language they were strangers; and this they unanimously agreed was the safest course. In short, they sent back Augustine, who had been appointed to be consecrated bishop in case they were received by the English, that he might by humble entreaty obtain of the blessed Gregory that they should not be compelled to undertake so dangerous, toilsome, and uncertain a journey. The pope, in reply, sent them a hortatory epistle, persuading them to proceed in the work of the word, and rely on the assistance of God. The form of this letter was as follows:

'*Gregory, the servant of the servants of God*,[1] *to the servants of our Lord.* Forasmuch as it had been better not to begin a good work than to think of desisting from that which has been begun, it behooves you, my beloved sons, to fulfil the good work which, by the help of our Lord, you have undertaken. Let not, therefore, the toil of the journey nor the tongues of evil-speaking men deter you; but with all possible earnestness and zeal perform that which, by God's direction, you have undertaken, being assured that much labor is followed by an eternal reward. When Augustine, your chief, returns, whom we also constitute your abbot, humbly obey him in all things, knowing that whatsoever you shall do by his direction will in all respects be available to your souls. Almighty God

[1] Gregory was the first pope to assume this style (Plummer).

protect you with His grace, and grant that I may see in the heavenly country the fruits of your labor, inasmuch as, though I cannot labor with you, I shall partake in the joy of the reward, because I am at least willing to labor. God keep you in safety, my most beloved sons. Dated this 23d of July, in the fourteenth year of the reign of our most pious Emperor Mauritius Tiberius, the thirteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, in the fourteenth indiction.'

## 7. THE ARRIVAL OF AUGUSTINE (A.D. 597)

Bk. 1, chap. 25

Augustine, thus strengthened by the confirmation of the blessed father Gregory, returned to the work of the word with the servants of Christ, and arrived in Britain. The powerful Æthelbert was at that time king of Kent. He had extended his dominions as far as the great river Humber, by which the Southern Saxons are divided from the Northern. On the east of Kent is the large Isle of Thanet, containing, according to the English way of reckoning, six hundred hides,[1] divided from the other land by the river Wantsum,[2] which is about three furlongs over, and fordable only in two places, for both mouths of it run into the sea. In this island landed the servant of our Lord, Augustine, and his companions, being, as is reported, nearly forty men.

They had, by order of the blessed Pope Gregory, taken interpreters of the nation of the Franks, and sending to

[1] 'The amount considered adequate for the support of one free family with its dependants. . . . The general conclusion appears to be that it was normally 120 acres; but the size of the acre itself varied' (*New Eng. Dict.*). Thanet actually contains less than 30,000 acres, including tidal water and foreshore.

[2] The lower course of the river Stour, below Stourmouth (Moberly).

Æthelbert, signified that they were come from Rome and brought a joyful message, which most undoubtedly assured to all that took advantage of it everlasting joys in heaven, and a kingdom that would never end with the living and true God. The king having heard this, ordered that they should remain in the island where they had landed, and that they should be furnished with all necessaries, till he should consider what to do with them. For he had before heard of the Christian religion, having a Christian wife of the royal family of the Franks, called Bertha,[1] whom he had received from her parents upon condition that she should be permitted to practise her religion with the bishop Liudhard, who was sent with her to preserve her faith.

Some days after, the king came into the island, and sitting in the open air, ordered Augustine and his companions to be brought into his presence. For he had taken precaution that they should not come to him in any house, lest, according to an ancient superstition, if they practised any magical arts, they might impose upon him, and so get the better of him. But they came furnished with divine, not with diabolic virtue, bearing a silver cross for their banner,[2] and the image of our Lord and Saviour painted on a board; and, singing litanies, they offered up their prayers to the Lord for the eternal salvation both of themselves and of those to whom they were come. When they had sat down, pursuant to the king's commands, and preached to him and his attendants there present the word of life, the king answered thus: 'Your words and promises are very fair, but as they are new to us and of uncertain import, I cannot approve of them so far as to

[1] Daughter of Charibert, King of Paris.
[2] See Wordsworth, *Eccl. Sonnets* 14.

forsake that which I have so long followed with the whole English nation. But because you are come from far into my kingdom, and, as I conceive, are desirous to impart to us those things which you believe to be true and most beneficial, we will not molest you, but give you favorable entertainment, and take care to supply you with your necessary sustenance; nor do we forbid you to preach and gain as many as you can to your religion.' Accordingly he permitted them to reside in the city of Canterbury, which was the metropolis of all his dominions, and, pursuant to his promise, besides allowing them sustenance, did not refuse them liberty to preach. It is reported that as they drew near to the city, after their manner, with the holy cross and the image of our sovereign Lord and King, Jesus Christ, they sang in concert this litany:[1] 'We beseech Thee, O Lord, in all Thy mercy, that Thy fury and Thine anger be turned away from this city, and from Thy holy house, because we have sinned. Alleluia.'

## 8. AUGUSTINE'S MANNER OF LIFE (A.D. 597)

Bk. 1, chap. 26

As soon as they entered the dwelling-place assigned them, they began to imitate the course of life practised in the primitive church: applying themselves to frequent prayer, watching, and fasting; preaching the word of life to as many as they could; despising all worldly things, as not belonging to them; receiving only their necessary food from those they taught; living themselves in all respects conformably to what they prescribed to others;

[1] 'A pathetic antiphon belonging to the Rogation days' (Bright, *Early Eng. Church Hist.*, p. 48), founded upon Dan. 9. 16.

and being always disposed to suffer any adversity, and even to die, for that truth which they preached. In short, several believed and were baptized, admiring the simplicity of their innocent life and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine. There was on the east side of the city a church [1] dedicated to the honor of St. Martin, built while the Romans were still in the island, wherein the queen, who, as has been said before, was a Christian, used to pray. In this they first began to meet, to sing, to pray, to say mass, to preach, and to baptize, till the king, being converted to the faith, allowed them to preach openly, and build or repair churches in all places.

When he, among the rest, induced by the unspotted life of these holy men and their delightful promises, which by many miracles they proved to be most certain, believed and was baptized, greater numbers began daily to flock together to hear the word, and, forsaking their heathen rites, to associate themselves by faith to the unity of the holy church of Christ. Their conversion the king so far encouraged as that he compelled none to embrace Christianity, but only showed more affection to the believers, as to his fellow-citizens in the heavenly kingdom. For he had learned from his instructors and leaders unto salvation that the service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not brought about by compulsion. Nor was it long before he gave his teachers a settled residence in his metropolis of Canterbury, with such possessions of different kinds as were necessary for their subsistence.

[1] Dean Stanley says (*Hist. Mem. Canterbury*, p. 31): 'The present church, old as it is, is of far later date, but it unquestionably retains in its walls some of the Roman bricks and Roman cement of Bertha's chapel. . . . Of all the great Christian saints of whom she [Bertha] had heard in France before she came to England, the most famous was St. Martin of Tours'; and hence Stanley suggests that the Canterbury church may have been named from him.

## 9. POPE GREGORY SENDS MORE LABORERS (A.D. 601)

Bk. 1, chap. 29

Moreover, the same Pope Gregory, hearing from Bishop Augustine that he had a great harvest and but few laborers, sent to him, together with his aforesaid messengers, several fellow-laborers and ministers of the word, of whom the first and principal were Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus, and by them all things in general that were necessary for the worship and service of the church — namely, sacred vessels and cloths for the altars, ornaments for the churches, and vestments for the priests and clerks, as likewise relics of the holy apostles and martyrs; besides many books. He also sent a letter, wherein he signified that he had transmitted the pall to him, and at the same time directed how he should constitute bishops in Britain.

## 10. THE LIFE OF POPE GREGORY

Bk. 2, chap. 1

At this time, that is, in the year of our Lord 605,[1] the blessed Pope Gregory, after having most gloriously governed the Roman and apostolic see thirteen years, six months, and ten days, died, and was translated to the eternal see of the heavenly kingdom. Of whom, in regard that he by his zeal converted our nation, the English, from the power of Satan[2] to the faith of Christ, it behooves us to discourse more at large in our *Ecclesiastical History*, for we may and ought rightly to call him our apostle; because, whereas he bore the pontifical power over all the world,

[1] An error for 604.

[2] Acts 26. 18.

and was placed over the churches already converted to the faith of truth, he made our nation, till then given up to idols, the church of Christ, so that we may be allowed thus to attribute to him the character of an apostle; for though he is not an apostle to others, yet he is so to us; for we are the seal of his apostleship in the Lord.[1]

He was by nation a Roman, son of Gordian, deducing his race from ancestors that were not only noble, but religious. And Felix,[2] once bishop of the same apostolical see, a man of great honor in Christ and his church, was an ancestor of his. Nor did he exercise the nobility of religion with less virtue of devotion than his parents and kindred. But that worldly nobility which he seemed to have, he entirely used, by the help of the divine grace, to gain the honor of eternal dignity; for soon quitting his secular habit, he repaired to a monastery, wherein he began to behave himself with so much grace of perfection that — as he was afterwards wont with tears to testify — his mind was above all transitory things; that he rose beyond all that is subject to change; that he used to think of nothing but what was heavenly; that, while detained by the body, he by contemplation broke through the bonds of flesh; and that he loved death, which to almost all men is a punishment, as the entrance into life, and the reward of his labors. This he said of himself, not to boast of his progress in virtue, but rather to bewail the decay which, as he was wont to aver, he imagined he sustained through the pastoral care. In short, when he was one day in private discoursing with Peter, his deacon, after having enumerated the former virtues of his mind, he with grief added:[3] 'But now, on account of the pastoral

[1] 1 Cor. 9. 2.

[2] Bishop of Rome, 483–492.

[3] Gregory's *Dialogues*, Bk. 1, Prol.

care, it is entangled with the affairs of laymen, and, after so beautiful an appearance of repose, is defiled with the dust of earthly action. And after having wasted itself by condescending to many things that are without, when it desires the inward things, it returns to them less qualified to enjoy them. I therefore consider what I endure, I consider what I have lost, and when I behold that loss, what I bear appears the more grievous.'

This the holy man said out of the excess of his humility. But it becomes us to believe that he lost nothing of his monastic perfection by his pastoral care, but rather that he improved the more through the labor of converting many than he had by the repose of his former tranquil life, and chiefly because, while exercising the pontifical function, he provided to have his house made a monastery. And when first drawn from the monastery, ordained to the ministry of the altar, and sent as nuncio to Constantinople from the apostolic see, though he now mixed with the people of the palace, yet he intermitted not his former heavenly life; for, some of the brethren of his monastery having out of brotherly charity followed him to the royal city, he kept them for the better following of regular observances — in order, namely, that at all times, by their example, as he writes himself,[1] he might be held fast to the calm shore of prayer, as it were with the cable of an anchor, while he was tossed up and down by the continual waves of worldly affairs; and daily among them, by the solace of studious reading, strengthen his mind when it was shaken with temporal concerns. By their company he was not only fortified against earthly assaults, but more and more inflamed to the exercises of the heavenly life.

[1] *Epistle to Leander, Bishop of Seville.*

For they persuaded him to give a mystical exposition of the book of holy Job,[1] which is involved in great obscurity; nor could he refuse to undertake that work, which brotherly affection imposed on him for the future benefit of many; but in a wonderful manner, in five and thirty books of exposition, taught how that same book is to be understood literally; how to be referred to the mysteries of Christ and the church; and in what sense it is to be adapted to every one of the faithful. This work he began when legate in the royal city, but finished it at Rome after being made pope. Whilst he was still in the royal city, he, by the assistance of the divine grace of catholic truth, crushed in its first rise a heresy newly started, concerning the state of our resurrection. . . .

He likewise composed another notable book, called the *Pastoral*,[2] wherein he manifestly showed what sort of persons ought to be preferred to govern the church, how such rulers ought to live, with how much discretion to instruct every one of their hearers, and how seriously to reflect every day on their own frailty. He also wrote forty homilies on the Gospel, which he divided equally into two volumes; and composed four books of dialogues,[3] into which, at the request of Peter, his deacon, he collected the miracles of the saints whom he either knew or had heard to be most renowned in Italy, for an example to posterity to lead their lives; to the end that, as he taught in his books of expositions what virtues ought to be labored for, so, by describing the miracles of saints, he might make known the glory of those virtues. He further, in twenty-two homilies, discovered how much light there is concealed in the first and last parts of the

[1] Known as the *Moralia*.

[2] See pp. 100 ff.

[3] Translated into Old English, and recently published.

prophet Ezekiel, which seemed the most obscure. Besides which, he wrote the *Book of Answers* to the questions of Augustine, the first bishop of the English nation, as we have shown above, inserting the same book entire in this history; besides the useful little *Synodical Book*, which he composed with the bishops of Italy on the necessary affairs of the church; and also familiar letters to certain persons. And it is the more wonderful that he could write so many and such large volumes, considering that almost all the time of his youth, to use his own words, he was often tormented with pains in his bowels and a weakness of his stomach, while he was continually suffering from slow fever. But whereas at the same time he carefully reflected that, as the Scripture testifies,[1] every son that is received is scourged, the more he labored and was depressed under those present evils, the more he assured himself of his eternal salvation.

Thus much may be said of his immortal genius, which could not be quenched by such severe bodily pains; for other popes applied themselves to building or adorning churches with gold and silver, but Gregory was entirely intent upon gaining souls. Whatsoever money he had, he diligently took care to distribute and give to the poor, that his righteousness might endure for ever, and his horn be exalted with honor;[2] so that what blessed Job said might be truly said of him:[3] 'When the ear heard me, then it blessed me,' etc. . . .

To these works of piety and righteousness this also may be added, that he saved our nation, by the preachers he sent hither, from the teeth of the old enemy, and made it partaker of eternal liberty; in whose faith and salvation

[1] Cf. Heb. 12. 6. [2] Ps. 112. 9.
[3] Job 29. 11–17; 31. 16–18.

rejoicing, and worthily commending the same, he, in his exposition on holy Job, says:[1] 'Behold, a tongue of Britain, which only knew how to utter barbarous language, has long since begun to resound the Hebrew Alleluia. Behold, the once swelling ocean now serves prostrate at the feet of the saints; and its barbarous motions, which earthly princes could not subdue with the sword, are now, through the fear of God, bound by the mouths of priests with words only; and he that when an infidel stood not in awe of fighting troops, now, a believer, fears the tongues of the humble. For by reason that the virtue of the divine knowledge is infused into it by the heavenly words it has hearkened to, and by conspicuous miracles, it is curbed by the dread of the same Godhead, so that it fears to act wickedly, and bends all its desires to arrive at the grace of eternity.' In which words St. Gregory declares this also, that St. Augustine and his companions brought the English to receive the truth not only by the preaching of words, but also by the showing of heavenly signs. The holy Pope Gregory, among other things, caused masses to be celebrated in the churches of the apostles Peter and Paul, over their bodies. And in the celebration of masses, he added three phrases,[2] full of great perfection: 'Dispose our days in thy peace, snatch us from eternal damnation, and rank us in the number of thy elect.'

He governed the church in the days of the Emperors Mauritius and Phocas, but passing out of this life in the second year of the same Phocas, he departed to the true life which is in heaven. His body was buried in the church of St. Peter the apostle, before the sacristy, on

[1] Bk. 27, chap. 11.

[2] On Gregory's liturgical reforms see the *Dict. Chr. Biog.* 2. 788–790; *Dict. Chr. Antiqq.* s.v. Sacramentary (see Plummer's notes on this passage, and on 1. 27, p. 47).

the 12th day of March,[1] to rise one day in the same body in glory with the other pastors of Holy Church. On his tomb was written this epitaph:

Earth, take that body which at first you gave,
Till God again shall raise it from the grave.
His soul amidst the stars finds heavenly day;
In vain the gates of darkness make essay
On him whose death but leads to life the way.
To the dark tomb this prelate though decreed,
Lives in all places by his pious deed.
Before his bounteous board pale Hunger fled;
To warm the poor he fleecy garments spread;
And to secure their souls from Satan's power,
He taught by sacred precepts every hour;
Nor only taught, but first the example led,
Lived o'er his rules, and acted what he said.
To English Saxons Christian truth he taught,
And a believing flock to heaven he brought.
This was thy work and study, this thy care,
Offerings to thy Redeemer to prepare;
For these to heavenly honors raised on high,[2]
Where thy reward of labors ne'er shall die.

Nor is the account of St. Gregory which has been handed down to us by the tradition of our ancestors to be passed by in silence, in relation to his motives for taking such interest in the salvation of our nation. It is reported that some merchants, having just arrived at Rome on a certain day,[3] exposed many things for sale in

[1] A.D. 604.

[2] This line, like much of the epitaph, might be more exactly rendered than it has been by Giles. One feels the old Roman spirit in the line:

Hisque Dei consul factus lætare triumphis.

We may translate the last two lines:

God's consul now, rejoice in triumph won;
Unending meed thou hast for labors done.

[3] Between 585 and 588 A.D.

the market-place, and abundance of people resorted thither to buy. Gregory himself went with the rest, and, among other things, some boys were set to sale,[1] their bodies white, their countenances comely, and their hair of remarkable beauty. Having viewed them, he asked, as is said, from what country or nation they were brought, and was told, from the island of Britain, whose inhabitants were of such personal appearance.[2] He again inquired whether those islanders were Christians, or still involved in the errors of heathendom; and was informed that they were heathens. Then fetching a deep sigh from the bottom of his heart, 'Alas! what a pity,' said he, 'that the author of darkness should possess men of such fair countenances, and that, being remarkable for such grace of exterior, their minds should be void of inward grace!' He therefore again asked what was the name of that nation, and was answered that they were called Angles. 'Right,' said he, 'for they have an angelic face, and it becomes such to be coheirs with the angels in heaven. What is the name,' proceeded he, 'of the province from which they are brought?' It was replied that the natives of that province were called Deiri. 'Truly are they *De ira*,' said he, 'snatched from wrath, and called to the mercy of Christ. — How is the king of that province called?' They told him his name was Ælli; and he, playing on the name, said, 'Alleluia, the praise of God the Creator ought to be sung in those parts.'

Then repairing to the bishop of the Roman and apostolic see — for he was not yet himself made pope — he entreated him to send some ministers of the word into Britain to the nation of the English, by whom it might

[1] In a letter to a certain Candidus, which has been assigned to September, 595, Gregory directs him to purchase English boys, of about seventeen or eighteen years of age, for training up in monasteries.

[2] See Wordsworth, *Eccl. Sonnets* 13.

be converted to Christ; declaring himself ready to undertake that work, by the assistance of God, if the apostolic pope should think fit to have it so done. Which not being then able to perform — because, though the pope was willing to grant his request, yet the citizens of Rome could not be brought to consent that he should depart so far from the city — as soon as he was himself made pope, he carried out the long-desired work, sending indeed others as preachers, but himself by his prayers and exhortations assisting the preaching, that it might be successful. This account, as we have received it from the ancients, we have thought fit to insert in our *Ecclesiastical History.*

## 11. KING EDWIN OF NORTHUMBRIA EMBRACES CHRISTIANITY (A.D. 627)

Bk. 2, chap. 13

The king, hearing these words, answered that he was both willing and bound to receive the faith which he taught, but that he would confer about it with his principal friends and counselors,[1] to the end that if they also were of his opinion, they might all together be hallowed in Christ, the Fountain of life. Paulinus consenting, the king did as he said; for, holding a council with the wise men, he asked of every one in particular what he thought of the new doctrine and worship of the Deity that was preached. To whom the chief of his own priests, Coifi, immediately answered: 'O king, consider what this is which is now preached to us; for I verily declare to you what I have learned for certain, that the religion which we have hitherto held has no virtue or utility in it. For none of your people has applied himself more diligently

[1] OE. *witan,* from which *witenagemōt.*

to the worship of our gods than I; and yet there are many who receive greater favors from you, and obtain greater dignities than I, and are more prosperous in all their undertakings. Now if our gods were good for anything, they would rather assist me, who have been more careful to serve them. It remains, therefore, that if upon examination you find those new doctrines, which are now preached to us, better and more efficacious, we immediately receive them without delay.'

Another of the king's chief men, assenting to his prudent words and exhortations, straightway added:[1] 'O king, the present life of man on earth seems to me, in comparison with the time of which we are ignorant, as if you were sitting at a feast with your chief men and thanes in the winter time, and a fire were kindled in the midst and the hall warmed, while everywhere outside there were raging whirlwinds of wintry rain and snow; and as if then there came a stray[2] sparrow, and swiftly flew through the house, entering at one door and passing out through another. As long as he is inside, he is not buffeted by the winter's storm; but in the twinkling of an eye the lull for him is over, and he speeds from winter back to winter again, and is gone from your sight. So this life of man appeareth for a little time;[3] but what cometh after, or what went before, we know not. If therefore this new doctrine contains something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed.' The other elders and king's counselors spoke, by divine inspiration, to the same effect.

But Coifi added that he wished more attentively to hear Paulinus discourse concerning the God whom he

[1] Cf. Wordsworth, *Eccl. Sonnets* 16.

[2] This seems to be suggested by *unus ex passerum*. For the figure cf. Hos. 9. 11.

[3] Jas. 4. 14.

preached; which he having by the king's command performed, Coifi, hearing his words, cried out: 'I have long since been sensible that there was nothing in that which we worshiped, because the more diligently I sought after truth in that worship, the less I found it. But now I freely confess that such truth evidently appears in this preaching as can confer on us the gifts of life, of salvation, and of eternal happiness. For which reason I advise, O king, that we instantly abjure and set fire to those temples and altars which we have consecrated without reaping any benefit from them.' In short, the king publicly gave his license to the blessed Paulinus to preach the Gospel, and, renouncing idolatry, declared that he received the faith of Christ; and when he inquired of the above-mentioned high priest who should first profane the altars and temples of their idols,[1] with the enclosures that were about them, he answered, 'I. Who is fitter to destroy as an example to all others those things which I worshiped in my folly and ignorance, than I, acting upon the wisdom which has been given me by the true God?' Then immediately, casting away his vain superstition, he desired the king to furnish him with arms and a stallion, and, mounting the same, set out to destroy the idols — for it had not been lawful for the high priest to carry arms, or to ride except on a mare. Having, therefore, girt a sword about him, he took a spear in his hand, mounted the king's stallion, and proceeded to the idols. The multitude, beholding it, concluded he was insane; but he lost no time, for as soon as he drew near the temple he profaned it, casting into it the spear which he held; and, rejoicing in the knowledge of the worship of the true God, he

[1] Cf. Plummer's note on *fana idolorum*, 1. 30, and Cook's note on line 485, *The Christ of Cynewulf*.

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[illegible] FOR GIRLS

commanded his companions to destroy the temple, with all its enclosures, and burn them with fire. The place where the idols were is still shown, not far from York to the eastward, beyond the river Derwent, and is now called Godmundingham,[1] where the high priest, by the inspiration of the true God, polluted and destroyed the altars which he had himself consecrated.[2]

## 12. THE BAPTISM OF KING EDWIN (A.D. 627)

Bk. 2, chap. 14

King Edwin, therefore, with all the nobility of the nation,[3] and a large number of the common sort, received the faith and the washing of regeneration in the eleventh year of his reign, which is the year of the incarnation of our Lord 627, and about one hundred and eighty after the coming of the English into Britain. He was baptized at York on the holy day of Easter, being the 12th of April,[4] in the church of Peter the apostle,[5] which he himself had built of timber while he was undergoing the training of a catechumen and being prepared to receive baptism. In that city also he appointed the see of the bishopric of his instructor and bishop, Paulinus. But as soon as he was baptized, he took care, by the direction of the same Paulinus, to build in the same place a larger and nobler church of stone,[6] in the midst whereof that

[1] Now Goodmanham, 1½ miles N.E. of Market Weighton.

[2] An adaptation of Virgil, *Æn.* 2. 501–2.

[3] Including the future Abbess Hild (Bede 4. 23), the patroness of Cædmon. See p. 51.

[4] Bright (*Early Eng. Church Hist.*, p. 118) says Easter Eve, April 11.

[5] On the site of the present cathedral (Bright, p. 117).

[6] For the material of Saxon churches, see Plummer's note, and cf. Cook's note on line 27, *The Christ of Cynewulf*.

same oratory which he had first erected should be enclosed.[1] Having therefore laid the foundation, he began to build the church square, encompassing the former oratory. But before the whole was raised to the proper height, the wicked assassination of the king left that work to be finished by Oswald his successor.

## 13. KING EDWIN'S RULE (A.D. 617–633)

Bk. 2, chap. 16

It is reported that there was then such perfect peace in Britain, wheresoever the dominion of King Edwin extended,[2] that, as is still proverbially said, a woman with her new-born babe might walk throughout the island from sea to sea, without receiving any harm. That king took such care for the good of his nation that in several places where he had seen clear springs near the highways he caused stakes to be fixed, with brass cups hanging from them, for the refreshment of travelers; nor durst any man touch them for any other purpose than that for which they were designed, either through the dread they had of the king, or for the affection which they bore him. His dignity was so great throughout his dominions that his banners were not only borne before him in battle, but even in time of peace, when he rode about his cities, towns, or provinces with his thanes, the standard-bearer was wont to go before him. Moreover, when he walked along the streets, that sort of banner which the Romans call *tufa*, and the English, *thuuf*, was in like manner borne before him.

[1] This wooden sanctuary was carefully preserved, and enriched with splendid altars and vessels by Archbishop Albert (Bright, p. 119).

[2] It extended at least as far as Edinburgh, Edwin's Burgh.

## 14. KING OSWALD AT HEAVENFIELD (A.D. 635)

Bk. 3, chap. 2

The place is shown to this day, and held in much veneration, where Oswald, being about to engage, erected the sign of the holy cross, and on his knees prayed to God that he would assist his worshipers in their great distress. It is further reported that, the cross being made in haste, and the hole dug in which it was to be fixed, the king himself, full of faith, laid hold of it, placed it in the hole, and held it with both his hands till it was set fast by soldiers' casting in earth. This done, he raised his voice, and cried to his whole army: 'Let us all kneel, and jointly beseech the true and living God Almighty that of His mercy He will defend us from our fierce and haughty enemy, for He knows that we have undertaken a just war for the safety of our nation.' All did as he had commanded, and, advancing towards the enemy with the first dawn of day, they obtained the victory, as their faith deserved.[1] In that place of prayer very many miraculous cures are known to have been performed as a token and memorial of the king's faith, for even to this day many are wont to cut off small chips from the wood of the holy cross, which being put into water, men or cattle drinking thereof, or sprinkled with that water, are immediately restored to health.

The place in the English tongue is called Heavenfield,[2] or the Heavenly Field, which name it formerly received as a presage of what was afterwards to happen, denoting

[1] Bright says (p. 132) that this field 'witnessed not only the death-blow to Welsh schemes of reconquest, but the definitive triumph of the Christian cause in Northumbria.'

[2] Where is now St. Oswald's Chapel, about eight miles north of Hexham; or perhaps Hallington, a mile or so east of St. Oswald's.

that there the heavenly trophy would be erected,[1] the heavenly victory begun, and heavenly miracles be wrought to this day. The same place is near the wall with which the Romans formerly enclosed the island from sea to sea, to restrain the fury of the barbarous nations, as has been said before.[2]

## 15. THE COMING OF AIDAN (A.D. 635)

Bk. 3, chap. 3

The same Oswald, as soon as he ascended the throne, being desirous that all his nation should receive the Christian faith, whereof he had found happy experience in vanquishing the barbarians, sent to the elders of the Irish, among whom himself and the soldiers his followers, when in banishment, had received the sacrament of baptism, desiring they would send him a bishop, by whose instruction and ministry the people of the Angles which he governed might be taught the advantages, and receive the sacraments, of the Christian faith. Nor was he slow in obtaining what he requested, but received as bishop Aidan, a man of singular gentleness, piety, and moderation, zealous in the cause of God. . . .

On the arrival of the bishop, the king appointed him his episcopal see in the isle of Lindisfarne, as he desired; this place, as the tide flows and ebbs twice a day, is enclosed by the waves of the sea like an island, and again, twice in the day, when the shore is left dry, becomes contiguous to the land. The king, humbly and willingly in all cases giving ear to his admonitions, industriously

[1] See Stevens, *The Cross in the Life and Literature of the Anglo-Saxons* (*Yale Studies in English*), pp. 81 ff.

[2] See p. 13.

applied himself to build and extend the church of Christ in his kingdom; wherein, when the bishop, who was not skilful in the English tongue, preached the gospel, it was most delightful to see the king himself interpreting the word of God to his earls and thanes, for he had perfectly learned the Irish language during his long banishment. From that time many of the Irish came daily into Britain, and with great devotion preached the word to those tribes of the Angles over which King Oswald reigned, and those among them that had received priest's orders administered to them the grace of baptism. Churches were built in several places; the people joyfully flocked together to hear the word; lands were given of the king's bounty to build monasteries; and the children of the Angles were instructed by Irish teachers, together with their elders, in the pursuits and observance of monastic discipline, since most of them that came to preach were monks.

### 16. AIDAN'S MANNER OF LIFE (A.D. 635)

Bk. 3, chap. 5

From this island, from the confraternity of these monks, was Aidan sent to instruct the province of the Angles in Christ, having received the dignity of a bishop at the time when Segeni, abbot and priest, presided over that monastery; whence, among other instructions for life, he left the clergy a most salutary example of abstinence or continence. It was the highest commendation of his doctrine with all men that he taught no otherwise than as he and his followers were living;[1] for he neither sought nor loved anything of this world, but delighted in distributing

[1] Cf. Chaucer's 'poure persoun' (*Prol.* 496 ff.), and Mayor and Lumby's note on this passage; see also pp. 21, 242.

immediately among the poor whatsoever was given him by the kings or rich men of the world. He was wont to traverse both town and country on foot, never on horseback,[1] unless compelled by some urgent necessity; and wherever in his way he saw any, either rich or poor, he would turn aside to them, and invite them, if unbelievers, to embrace the mystery of the faith; or if they were believers, he would strengthen them in the faith, and stir them up by words and actions to alms and good works.

His course of life was so different from the slothfulness of our times that all those who bore him company, whether tonsured monks or laymen, were employed in study, that is, either in reading the Scriptures or in learning Psalms.[2] This was the daily employment of himself and all that were with him, wheresoever they went; and if it happened, which was but seldom, that he was invited to eat with the king, he went with one or two clerks, and having taken a small repast, made haste to be gone with them, either to read or to pray. At that time many religious men and women, stirred up by his example, adopted the custom of fasting till the ninth hour[3] on Wednesdays and Fridays throughout the year, except during the fifty days after Easter. He never kept silence before the rich concerning their sins, either out of deference or fear, but reproved them with severe rebukes. He never would give money to the powerful men of the world, but only food, if he happened to entertain them; and, on the contrary, whatsoever gifts of money he received from the rich, he either distributed, as has been said, for the use of the poor, or bestowed in ransoming such as had been wrongfully

[1] Cf. p. 41.

[2] See Plummer's note.

[3] Mayor and Lumby say: 'The ninth hour proved ultimately too rigorous a limit, and soon was moved backward till it meant midday.'

sold.[1] Moreover, he afterwards made many of those he had ransomed his disciples, and after having taught and instructed them, advanced them to the order of priesthood.

It is reported that when King Oswald had asked for a bishop from the Irish province[2] to minister the word of faith to him and his nation, there was first sent to him another man of more austere disposition, who, when he had preached for some time to the people of the Angles without success—they being loath even to listen to him—returned home, and in an assembly of the elders reported that he had been able to accomplish nothing in teaching the people to whom he had been sent, because they were untamable men, and of a stubborn and barbarous disposition. They, as is testified, seriously debated in a council what was to be done, being desirous to afford the nation the salvation for which they were asked, and grieving that they had not received the preacher sent to them. Then said Aidan, who was also present in the council, to the priest under consideration: 'I suspect, brother, that you were more severe to your unlearned hearers than you ought to have been, and did not at first, conformably to the apostolic rule, give them the milk[3] of more easy doctrine, till, being by degrees nourished with the word of God, they should be capable of greater perfection, and be able to practise God's sublimer precepts.' Having heard these words, all present, turning their faces and eyes upon him, began diligently to discuss what he had said, and presently concluded that he deserved to be made a bishop, and ought to be sent to instruct the unbelieving and unlearned, since he was found to be endued with singular discretion, which is the mother of the virtues. Accordingly, having ordained him, they sent him out to preach;

[1] Cf. p. 30. [2] Meaning Iona. [3] 1 Cor. 3. 2.

and he, as time proved, turned out subsequently to be adorned with other virtues, as at first he seemed remarkable for the temperance of his discretion.

## 17. THE HUMILITY OF KING OSWIN

Bk. 3, chap. 14

King Oswin was of a graceful aspect, tall of stature, affable in discourse, courteous in behavior, and bountiful to all, whether gentle or simple; so that he was beloved by every one for the kingliness of his spirit and his looks, and for his distinguished merit, and men of the very first rank came from almost every province to serve him. Among other virtues and rare endowments, if I may so express it, humility is said to have been the greatest, as one example may suffice to prove.

He had given an extraordinarily fine horse to Bishop Aidan, which he might use either in crossing rivers or in performing a journey upon any urgent necessity, though he was wont to travel ordinarily on foot. Some short time after, a poor man meeting him and asking alms, he immediately dismounted, and ordered the horse, with all its royal furniture, to be given to the beggar; for he was very compassionate, a great friend to the poor, and, as it were, the father of the wretched. This being told to the king, he said to the bishop as they chanced to be going in to dinner: 'Why would you, my lord bishop, give the poor man that royal horse, which you ought to have kept for yourself? Had we not many other horses of less value, and of other sorts, which would have been good enough to give to the poor, without giving that horse, which I had particularly chosen for yourself?' To whom the bishop instantly answered, 'What is it you say, O king?

Is that foal of a mare dearer to you than this child of God?' Thereupon they went in to dinner, and the bishop sat in his place; but the king, who was come from hunting, stood warming himself with his attendants at the fire. Then on a sudden while he was warming himself, calling to mind what the bishop had said to him, he ungirt his sword and gave it to a servant, and running to the bishop, fell down at his feet, beseeching him to forgive him, 'For from this time forward,' said he, 'I will never speak any more of this, nor will I pass judgment on what or how much of our money you may give to the children of God.' The bishop feared greatly at this sight, and starting up, raised him, saying that he would be entirely reconciled to him if he would sit down to meat and lay aside all sorrow. The king, at the bishop's command and entreaty, beginning to be merry, the bishop, on the other hand, grew so melancholy as to shed tears. His priest then asking him, in the language of his country, which the king and his servants did not understand, why he wept, 'I know,' said he, 'that the king will not live long, for I never before saw so humble a king; whence I conclude that he will soon be snatched out of this life, because this people is not worthy of such a ruler.' Not long after, the bishop's prediction was fulfilled by the king's death, as has been said above.[1] But Bishop Aidan himself was also taken out of this world, twelve days after the slaying of the king he loved, on the 31st of August,[2] to receive the eternal reward of his labors from our Lord.

[1] Oswin had ruled the province of Deira in great prosperity for seven years when he was murdered by the command of Oswy, king of Bernicia. Upon this, Deira and Bernicia were permanently united to form the kingdom of Northumbria.

[2] A.D. 651.

## 18. BEDE'S FINAL ESTIMATE OF AIDAN

Bk. 3, chap. 17

I have written thus much concerning the person and works of the aforesaid Aidan, in no way commending or approving what he imperfectly understood in relation to the observance of Easter; nay, very much detesting the same, as I have most manifestly proved in the book I have written *De Temporibus*[1]; but, like an impartial historian, relating what was done concerning or by him, commending such things as are praiseworthy in his actions, and preserving the memory thereof for the benefit of my readers — namely, his love of peace and charity, of continence and humility; his mind superior to anger and avarice, and despising pride and vainglory; his industry in keeping and teaching the heavenly commandments; his diligence in reading and watching; his authority becoming a priest in reproving the haughty and powerful, and at the same time his tenderness in comforting the sick, and relieving or defending the poor. To say all in a few words, as near as I could be informed by those that knew him, he took care to omit none of those things which he found were to be done, according to the Gospels or the apostolical or prophetical writings, but to the utmost of his power endeavored to perform them all.

These things I much love and admire in the aforesaid bishop, because I do not doubt that they were well pleasing to God; but I do not praise or approve his not observing Easter at the proper time, either through ignorance of the canonical time appointed, or, if he knew it, being prevailed on by the authority of his nation not to follow the same. Yet this I approve in him, that in the

[1] Rather the *De Temporum Ratione.*

celebration of his Easter, the object which he had in view in all he believed, worshiped, and preached, was the same as ours, that is, the redemption of mankind through the passion, resurrection, and ascension into heaven of the mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus.[1]

## 19. THE CHOICE OF THEODORE AND HADRIAN (A.D. 667–8)

Bk. 4, chap. 1

There was then in the Niridan monastery, which is not far from the city of Naples in Campania,[2] an abbot called Hadrian,[3] by nation an African, well versed in Holy Writ, experienced in monastic and ecclesiastical discipline, and excellently skilled in both the Greek and Latin tongues. The pope, sending for him, commanded him to accept the bishopric, and repair to Britain. He answered that he was unworthy of so great a dignity, but said he could name another, whose learning and age were fitter for the episcopal office. And having proposed to the pope a certain monk belonging to a neighboring monastery of celibates, whose name was Andrew, the latter was by all that knew him judged worthy of the bishopric; but bodily infirmity prevented his being advanced to the episcopal station. Then again Hadrian was pressed to accept the bishopric, but he desired a respite for a time, to see whether he could find another fit to be ordained bishop.

There was at that time in Rome a monk called Theodore, well known to Hadrian, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, a man well instructed in secular and sacred literature as well as in Greek and Latin, of excellent character and

[1] 1 Tim. 2. 5. [2] It was near the present Monte Cassino.
[3] For Hadrian and Theodore, see especially the *Dict. Chr. Biog.*

venerable age, being sixty-six years old. Hadrian suggested him to the pope to be ordained bishop, and prevailed, but upon these conditions: first, that Hadrian himself should conduct him to Britain, because he had already, for various reasons, twice visited Gaul, and was therefore better acquainted with the way, and was moreover well provided with men of his own; and secondly, that he should serve as his fellow-laborer in teaching, and thus keep careful watch that Theodore should not, after the manner of the Greeks, introduce anything contrary to the true faith[1] into the church over which he was to preside. Theodore, being ordained subdeacon, waited four months for his hair to grow, that it might be shorn into the shape of a crown; for hitherto he had had the tonsure of St. Paul the apostle, after the manner of the Orientals. He was ordained by Pope Vitalian in the year of our Lord 668, on Sunday, the 26th of March, and on the 27th of May [668] was sent with Hadrian to Britain.[2]

## 20. THE TEACHING OF THEODORE (From A.D. 669)

Bk. 4, chap. 2

Theodore arrived at his church the second year after his consecration, on Sunday, the 27th of May, and held the same twenty-one years, three months, and twenty-six days. Soon after, he visited all the island, wherever the tribes of the English inhabited, for he was willingly entertained and heard by all persons; and, everywhere attended and assisted by Hadrian, he taught the right rule of life, and the canonical custom of celebrating Easter. He was the first archbishop whom all the English church obeyed.

[1] See Bright, *Early Eng. Church Hist.*, p. 220.

[2] Benedict Biscop accompanied them; see Bright, as above, p. 221.

And because both of them were, as has been said before, well read both in sacred and secular literature, they gathered a crowd of disciples, and there daily flowed from them rivers of sound learning to water the hearts of their hearers, insomuch that, together with the books of Holy Writ, they taught them the arts of prosody, astronomy, and ecclesiastical arithmetic.[1] A testimony of which is that there are still living at this day some of their scholars who are as well versed in the Greek and Latin tongues as in their own, wherein they were born.[2] Nor were there ever happier times since the English came to Britain, for since they had kings who were brave men and good Christians, they were a terror to all barbarous nations; the minds of all men were bent upon the joys of the heavenly kingdom of which they had just heard; and all who desired to be instructed in sacred learning had masters at hand to teach them. From that time also they began in all the churches of the English to learn sacred music, which till then had been known only in Kent.

## 21. THE LIFE AND DEATH OF CHAD

Bk. 4, chap. 3

Chad had his episcopal see in the place called Lichfield, in which he also died and was buried, and where the see of the succeeding bishops of that province still continues. He had built himself a dwelling not far from the church, wherein he was wont to pray and read with seven or eight of the brethren, as often as he had any

[1] The art of calculating church seasons. Bright says (p. 238): 'This great school became the prototype of the yet more famous school of York in the next century, . . . out of which arose the illustrious Alcuin.'

[2] See the interesting note in Mayor and Lumby's edition.

spare time from the labor and ministry of the word. When he had most gloriously governed the church in that province two years and a half, Divine Providence ordained that there should come a season like that of which Ecclesiastes says, 'A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together'[1]; for there happened a mortality sent from heaven, which, by means of the death of the flesh, transferred the living stones of the church from their earthly places to the heavenly building. And when, after many from the church of that most reverend prelate had been taken out of the flesh, his hour also drew near wherein he was to pass out of this world to the Lord, it happened one day that he was in the aforesaid dwelling with only one brother, called Owin, his other companions having, for some good reason, returned to the church. Now Owin was a monk of great merit, having forsaken the world with the pure intention of obtaining the heavenly reward, worthy in all respects to have the secrets of the Lord revealed to him, and worthy to have credit given by his hearers to what he said. He had come[2] with Queen Æthelthryth from the province of the East Angles, and was chief of her thanes and steward of her household. As the fervor of his faith increased, he resolved to renounce the world, and did not go about it slothfully, but so fully forsook the things of this world that, quitting all that he had, clad only in a plain garment, and carrying an ax and a hatchet in his hand, he came to the monastery of that most reverend prelate, called Lastingham[3]; by this denoting that he did not go to the monastery to live idle, as some do, but to labor. This he also confirmed by his practice, for as he was less capable of

[1] Eccl. 3. 5.

[2] In 660.

[3] Seven miles N.W. of Pickering, in Yorkshire; it was from this monastery that Chad had come to Lichfield.

studying the Scriptures, he the more earnestly applied himself to the labor of his hands.[1] In short, having been received, in company with the bishop, into the house aforesaid, and there entertained with the brethren for the sake of his reverent devotion, he, while they were engaged within in reading, would remain outside, and do such things as were necessary.

One day when he was thus employed abroad, his companions having gone to the church, as I began to state, and the bishop being alone, reading or praying in the oratory of that place, on a sudden, as he afterwards would say, he heard the voice of persons singing most sweetly and rejoicing, and appearing to descend from heaven to earth. This voice he said he first heard coming from the southeast,[2] that is, from the point where the winter sun rises, and that afterwards it drew near him till it came to the roof of the oratory where the bishop was, and, entering therein, filled the same and all about it. He listened attentively to what he heard, and after about half an hour perceived the same song of joy ascend from the roof of the said oratory, and return to heaven, with inexpressible sweetness, the same way it came. When he had stood some brief space astonished, and was seriously revolving in his mind what it might be, the bishop opened the window of the oratory, and snapping his fingers, as he was often wont to do if any one was outside, bade him come in to him. He accordingly went in with speed, and the bishop said to him: 'Make haste to the church, and cause those seven brethren to come hither, and do you come with them.' When they were come, he first admonished them to maintain the virtue of love and peace among themselves and toward all believers, and

[1] See below, p. 245. [2] A sacred quarter; cf. p. 62, note.

indefatigably to practise the rules of regular discipline which they had either been taught by him or seen him observe, or had noticed in the words or actions of the fathers who had gone before. Then he added that the day of his death was at hand, 'for,' said he, 'that lovely guest who has been wont to visit our brethren has vouchsafed also to come to me this day, and to call me out of this world. Return, therefore, to the church, and speak to the brethren that they in their prayers recommend my departure to the Lord, and that they be careful to provide for their own, the hour whereof is uncertain, by watching, prayer, and good works.'

When he had spoken thus much and more, and they, having received his blessing, had gone away in sorrow, he who had heard the heavenly song returned alone, and prostrating himself on the ground, said: 'I beseech you, father, may I ask a question?' 'Ask what you will,' answered the bishop. Owin rejoined: 'I entreat you to tell me what song that was which I heard issuing from those rejoicing ones who descended from the sky upon this oratory, and who after some time returned to heaven?' The bishop answered: 'If you heard the singing, and knew of the approach of the heavenly company, I charge you in the name of the Lord not to tell the same to any one before my death. They were angelic spirits, who came to call me to the heavenly reward which I have always loved and longed for, and they promised to return seven days from now and take me away with them.' This was fulfilled as had been said to him; for — being presently seized with a languishing distemper, and the same daily increasing — on the seventh day, as had been promised to him, when he had prepared for death by receiving the body and blood of our Lord, his holy soul being delivered from

the prison[1] of the body, and the angels, as may justly be believed, attending him, he departed to the everlasting joys.

## 22. JOHN, THE SINGER OF THE APOSTOLIC SEE (A.D. 680)

Bk. 4, chap. 18

He [Benedict Biscop] then received the aforesaid Abbot John to be conducted into Britain, that he might teach in his monastery the annual round of musical services as it was practised at St. Peter's at Rome. Abbot John did as he had been commanded by the pope, teaching orally to the singers of the said monastery the order and manner of singing and reading, and also committing to writing all that was requisite throughout the whole course of the year for the celebration of festivals; all which are still observed in that monastery, and have been copied by many others in various places. Not only did the said John teach the brothers of that monastery, but such as had skill in singing resorted from almost all the monasteries of that province to hear him, and many invited him to teach in other places.

## 23. THE LIFE AND DEATH OF THE ABBESS HILD

Bk. 4, chap. 23

In the following year, namely that of our Lord's incarnation 680, on the 17th of November, the most religious servant of Christ, Hild, abbess of the monastery that is called Whitby, as above mentioned, after having performed many heavenly works on earth, passed from thence to receive the rewards of the heavenly life, at the age of

[1] Various occurrences of this figure in English and other literatures are noted in Cook's edition of *The Dream of the Rood*, pp. 38–9.

sixty-six years, which fell into two equal divisions: the first thirty-three she spent in living most nobly in the secular habit, and more nobly dedicated the remaining half to our Lord in the monastic life. She was noble too by birth, being the daughter of Hereric, nephew to King Edwin, with which king,[1] moreover, at the preaching of Paulinus of blessed memory, the first bishop of the Northumbrians, she embraced the faith and mysteries of Christ, and preserved the same undefiled until she attained to the vision of Him in heaven.

Resolving to quit the secular habit, and to serve Him alone, she withdrew into the province of the East Angles, since she was a connection of the king;[2] being desirous, if it were at all possible, to pass over from thence into France, forsaking her native country and all she had, and so live for our Lord in the monastery of Chelles[3] as an exile, that she might the more easily attain to the eternal kingdom in heaven; because her sister Hereswith, mother to Aldwulf, king of the East Angles, at that time living in the same monastery under regular discipline, was waiting for her eternal crown. Being led by her example, she planned to go abroad, but was detained a whole year in the aforesaid province; afterwards, being recalled home by Bishop Aidan, she accepted a hide of land on the north side of the river Wear, where again for a year she with a very few companions led a monastic life.

After this she was made abbess in the monastery called Hartlepool,[4] which had been founded not long before by

[1] Cf. p. 34. [2] Her sister had married the king's brother.

[3] A little to the east of Paris. Mayor and Lumby say: 'The studies pursued in these nunneries may be inferred from the example of St. Radegunde, queen of France, foundress of Holy Cross convent at Poitiers, who there read Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, Athanasius, Hilary, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustine, Sedulius, and Orosius.'

[4] Eighteen miles S.E. of Durham, on the sea.

the religious handmaid of Christ, Heiu, who is said to have been the first woman in the province of the Northumbrians who took upon herself the vow and vesture of a nun, being consecrated by Bishop Aidan; but she, soon after she had founded that monastery, went away to the city of Tadcaster,[1] and there fixed her dwelling. Hild, the handmaid of Christ, being set over that monastery, began immediately to reduce all things to a regular system, as far as she could ascertain from learned men; for Bishop Aidan, and as many religious men as knew her, frequently visited, fervently loved, and diligently instructed her, because of her innate wisdom and attachment to the service of God.

When, therefore, she had for some eight years governed that monastery, wholly intent upon establishing the regular life, it happened that she also undertook either to build or to set in order a monastery in the place called Whitby.[2] This work laid upon her she industriously performed, for she put this monastery under the same regular discipline as the former, and taught there the strict observance of justice, piety, chastity, and other virtues, particularly of peace and charity, so that, after the example of the primitive church,[3] no person was there rich and none poor, all being in common to all, and none having any property. Her prudence was so great that not only indifferent persons, but even kings and princes, as occasion offered, asked and received her advice. She obliged those who were under her direction to attend so much to the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and to exercise themselves so much in works of righteousness, that many

[1] Nine miles S.W. of York. 'The village of Healaugh, about three miles north of Tadcaster, is believed to mark the site of St. Heiu's foundation, and possibly preserves her name' (Murray's *Yorkshire*, quoted by Plummer).

[2] A.D. 657. [3] Cf. Acts 4. 32–4; 2. 44–5.

might be there found fit for ecclesiastical duties, that is, to serve at the altar. . . .

Thus this handmaid of Christ, Abbess Hild, whom all that knew her called Mother for her singular piety and grace, was not only an example of good life to those that lived in her monastery, but afforded occasion of amendment and salvation to many who lived at a distance, to whom the fame was brought of her industry and virtue. . . .

When she had governed this monastery many years, it pleased Him who has made such merciful provision for our salvation, to give her holy soul the trial of a long sickness, to the end that, according to the apostle's example, her strength might be made perfect in weakness.[1] Smitten by fevers, she began to be tormented with violent heat, and was afflicted with the same for six years continually, during all which time she never failed either to return thanks to her Maker, or publicly and privately to instruct the flock committed to her charge, for by her own example she admonished all persons to serve God dutifully while in perfect health, and always to return thanks to Him when in adversity or bodily infirmity. In the seventh year of her sickness, the distemper turning inwards, she approached her last day, and about cock-crowing, having received the holy communion to further her on her way, and called together the handmaids of Christ who were within the same monastery, she admonished them to preserve the peace of the gospel among themselves and toward all others; and as she was uttering her admonitions, she joyfully beheld death, or, if I may use the words of our Lord, passed from death unto life.[2]

[1] 2 Cor. 12. 9. [2] John 5. 24.

## 24. THE POET CÆDMON (A.D. 680)

### Bk. 4, chap. 24[1]

There was in the monastery of this abbess a certain brother especially distinguished by the grace of God, since he was wont to make poems breathing of piety and religion. Whatever he learned of sacred Scripture by the mouth of interpreters, he in a little time gave forth in poetical language composed with the greatest sweetness and depth of feeling, in English, his native tongue; and the effect of his poems was ever and anon to incite the souls of many to despise the world and long for the heavenly life. Not but that there were others after him among the people of the Angles who sought to compose religious poetry; but none there was who could equal him, for he did not learn the art of song from men, nor through the means of any man; rather did he receive it as a free gift from God. Hence it came to pass that he never was able to compose poetry of a frivolous or idle sort; none but such as pertain to religion suited a tongue so religious as his. Living always the life of a layman until well advanced in years, he had never learned the least thing about poetry. In fact, so little did he understand of it that when at a feast it would be ruled that every one present should, for the entertainment of the others, sing in turn, he would, as soon as he saw the harp coming anywhere near him, jump up from the table in the midst of the banqueting, leave the place, and make the best of his way home.

This he had done at a certain time, and leaving the house where the feast was in progress, had gone out to

[1] Not merely a revision, but newly translated by Albert S. Cook for the companion volume to this, the *Select Translations from Old English Poetry*.

the stable where the care of the cattle had been assigned to him for that night. There, when it was time to go to sleep, he had lain down for that purpose. But while he slept some one stood by him in a dream, greeted him, called him by name, and said, 'Cædmon, sing me something.' To this he replied, 'I know not how to sing, and that is the very reason why I left the feast and came here, because I could not sing.' But the one who was talking with him answered, 'No matter, you are to sing for me.' 'Well, then,' said he, 'what is it that I must sing?' 'Sing,' said the other, 'the beginning of created things.' At this reply he immediately began to sing verses in praise of God the Creator, verses that he had never heard, and whose meaning is as follows: 'Now should we praise the Keeper of the heavenly kingdom, the might of the Creator and His counsel, the works of the Father of glory; how He, though God eternal, became the Author of all marvels. He, the almighty Guardian of mankind, first created for the sons of men heaven as a roof, and afterwards the earth.' This is the meaning, but not the precise order, of the words which he sang in his sleep; for no songs, however well they may be composed, can be rendered from one language into another without loss of grace and dignity. When he rose from sleep, he remembered all that he had sung while in that state, and shortly after added, in the same strain, many more words of a hymn befitting the majesty of God.

In the morning he went to the steward who was set over him, and showed him what gift he had acquired. Being led to the abbess, he was bidden to make known his dream and repeat his poem to the many learned men who were present, that they all might give their judgment concerning the thing which he related, and whence

it was; and they were unanimously of the opinion that heavenly grace had been bestowed upon him by the Lord. They then set about expounding to him a piece of sacred history or teaching, bidding him, if he could, to turn it into the rhythm of poetry. This he undertook to do, and departed. In the morning he returned and delivered the passage assigned to him, converted into an excellent poem. The abbess, honoring the grace of God as displayed in the man, shortly afterward instructed him to forsake the condition of a layman and take upon himself the vows of a monk. She thereupon received him into the monastery with his whole family, and made him one of the company of the brethren, commanding that he should be taught the whole course and succession of Biblical history. He, in turn, calling to mind what he was able to learn by the hearing of the ear, and, as it were, like a clean animal, chewing upon it as a cud,[1] transformed it all into most agreeable poetry; and, by echoing it back in a more harmonious form, made his teachers in turn listen to him. Thus he rehearsed the creation of the world, the origin of man, and all the story of Genesis; the departure of Israel from Egypt and their entry into the promised land, together with many other histories from Holy Writ; the incarnation of our Lord, His passion, resurrection, and ascension into heaven; the coming of the Holy Ghost and the teaching of the apostles; moreover he made many poems about the terror of the future judgment, the awfulness of the pains of hell, and the joy of the heavenly kingdom, besides a great number about the mercies and judgments of God. In all these he exerted himself to allure men from the love of wickedness, and to impel them to the love and practice of righteous living; for he

[1] Lev. 11. 3–6; Deut. 14. 6–8; Shakespeare, *A. Y. L.* 4. 3. 102.

was a very devout man, humbly submissive to the monastic rule, but full of consuming zeal against those who were disposed to act otherwise.

Hence it came to pass that he ended his life with a fair death. For when the hour of his departure drew nigh, he was afflicted for the space of a fortnight with a bodily weakness which seemed to prepare the way; yet it was so far from severe that he was able during the whole of that time to walk about and converse. Near at hand there was a cottage, to which those who were sick and appeared nigh unto death were usually taken. At the approach of evening on the same night when he was to leave the world, he desired his attendant to make ready a place there for him to take his rest. The attendant did so, though he could not help wondering at the request, since he did not seem in the least like a person about to die. When he was placed in the infirmary, he was somehow full of good humor, and kept talking and joking with those who had already been brought there. Some time after midnight he asked whether they had the eucharist at hand. 'What do you need of the eucharist?' they answered, 'you aren't going to die yet, for you are just as full of fun in talking with us as if nothing were the matter with you.' 'Never mind,' said he, 'bring me the eucharist.' Taking it in his hand, he asked, 'Are you all at peace with me, and free from any grudge or ill-will?' 'Yes,' they all responded, 'we are perfectly at peace with you, and cherish no grievance whatever.' 'But are you,' said they, 'entirely at peace with us?' 'Yes, my dear children,' he answered without hesitation, 'I am at peace with all the servants of God.' And thus saying, he made ready for his entrance into the other life by partaking of the heavenly journey-bread. Not long after he inquired,

'How near is it to the hour when the brethren are wakened for lauds?' 'But a little while,' was the reply. 'Well then,' said he, 'let us wait for that hour,' and, making over himself the sign of the cross, he laid his head on the pillow, and falling into a light slumber, ended his life in silence. And so it came to pass that, as he had served the Lord in simplicity and purity of mind, and with serene attachment and loyalty, so by a serene death he left the world, and went to look upon His face. And meet in truth it was that the tongue which had indited so many helpful words in praise of the Creator, should frame its very last words in His praise, while in the act of signing himself with the cross, and of commending his spirit into His hands. And that he foresaw his death is apparent from what has here been related.

## 25. DRYHTHELM'S VISION OF THE HEREAFTER[1]

Bk. 5, chap. 12

At this time a memorable miracle, and like to those of old, was wrought in Britain; for to the end that the living might be saved from the death of the soul, a certain man who had been some time dead rose again to the life of the body, and related many memorable things which he had seen; some of which I have thought fit here briefly to relate. There was a householder in that district of

[1] Cf. the vision of Fursa (3. 19). The visions of the other world, which perhaps begin with the *Book of Enoch* (pre-Christian), and are continued in the apocryphal *Acts of Thomas* (2d century), *Apocalypse of Peter* (2d century), and *Apocalypse of Paul* (4th century), here first appear on English soil. On the general subject, reference may be made to *The Dream of the Rood*, ed. Cook, p. lv, note 2; *The Pearl*, ed. Osgood, p. xxxvii, note 1; Bede's *Eccl. Hist.*, ed. Plummer, 2. 294–5. See also Plato, *Gorgias* 523 ff.; *Phædo* 113–4; Stewart, *The Myths of Plato;* Virgil, *Æn.* 6. 548 ff.; Dieterich, *Nekyia.*

Northumbria which is called Cunningham,[1] who led a religious life, as did all his house. This man fell sick, and his distemper daily increasing, he was brought to death's door, and died in the beginning of the night; but in the morning early he suddenly came to life again, and sat up, upon which all those that sat about the body weeping fled away in a great fright; only his wife, who loved him best, though in a great consternation and trembling, remained with him. He, comforting her, said, 'Fear not, for I am now truly risen from death, and permitted again to live among men; however, I am not to live hereafter as I was wont, but from henceforward after a very different manner.' Then rising immediately, he repaired to the chapel of the village, and continuing in prayer till day, immediately divided all his substance into three parts, one whereof he gave to his wife, another to his children, and reserving the third for himself, instantly distributed it among the poor. Not long after, having thus rid himself of worldly cares, he repaired to the monastery of Melrose, which is almost enclosed by a bend of the river Tweed; and having received the tonsure, went into a private dwelling which the abbot had provided, where he continued till the day of his death in such extraordinary contrition of mind and body that, though his tongue had been silent, his life declared that he had seen many things either to be dreaded or desired, which others knew nothing of.

And thus he related what he had seen: 'He that led me had a shining countenance and a bright garment, and we went on silently, as I thought, towards the northeast. Walking on, we came to a vale of great breadth and

[1] 'Generally identified with Cunningham, just within the Scotch border' (Plummer).

depth, and of infinite length. The part which lay at our left had one side full of dreadful flames, while the other was no less horrid for violent hail and cold, scudding and sweeping in all directions. Both places were full of men's souls, which seemed by turns to be tossed from one side to the other, as it were by the violence of tempest; for when the wretches could no longer endure the excess of heat, they leaped into the middle of the cutting cold; and, finding no rest there, would leap back again into the midst of the inextinguishable flames.[1] Now whereas an innumerable multitude of deformed spirits were thus alternately tormented, as far as one could look, without any intermission, I began to think that this might perhaps be hell, of whose intolerable flames I had often heard. My guide, who went before me, answered my thought, saying, "Do not believe so, for this is not the hell you imagine."

'When he had by degrees conducted me, much frightened with that horrid spectacle, to the further end, on a sudden I saw the place begin to grow dusky before us, and fill with darkness. When we had entered it, the darkness by degrees grew so thick that I could see nothing except the shape and clothing of him that led me. As we advanced through the shades of night, suddenly there appeared before us frequent globes of black flames, rising as it were out of a great pit, and falling back again into the same. When I had been conducted thither, my leader suddenly vanished, and left me alone in the midst of darkness and this horrid vision. Now while those same globes of fire without intermission at one time flew up and at another fell back into the bottom of the abyss, I observed that all the tips of the flames, as they ascended, were full of human souls, which, like sparks flying up

[1] Cf. Shakespeare, *M. for M.* 3. 1. 122–3; Milton, *P. L.* 2. 600 ff.

with smoke, were sometimes thrown on high, and again, when the fiery vapors ceased, dropped down into the depths below. Moreover, an insufferable stench came forth with the vapors, and filled all those dark places.

'Having stood there a long time in much dread, not knowing what to do, which way to turn, or what end I might expect, on a sudden I heard behind me the noise of most hideous and wretched lamentation, and at the same time a loud laughing, as of a rude multitude insulting captured enemies. When that noise, growing plainer, came up to me, I observed a gang of evil spirits dragging the howling and lamenting souls of five men into the midst of the darkness, while they themselves laughed and rejoiced above measure. Among those men, as I could discern, there was one tonsured like a clerk, one layman, and one woman. The evil spirits that dragged them went down into the midst of the burning pit; and as they went down deeper, I could no longer distinguish between the lamentation of the men and the laughing of the devils, yet I still had in my ears the mingled sound. In the meantime, some of the dark spirits ascended from that flaming abyss, and running forward encompassed me on all sides, and much afflicted me with their flaming eyes and the stinking fire which proceeded from their mouths and nostrils. They threatened also to lay hold on me with burning tongs which they had in their hands, yet they durst not touch me, though they were bold to frighten me. Being thus on all sides enclosed with enemies and darkness, and looking about on every side for assistance to escape, there appeared behind me, on the way that I came, as it were the brightness of a star[1] shining amidst the darkness, which increased by degrees, and

[1] Plummer compares Dante, *Purg.* 12. 89–90.

came rapidly towards me. And when it drew nigh, all those evil spirits that sought to carry me away with their tongs dispersed and fled.

'He whose approach put them to flight was the same that led me before, who then, turning towards the right, began to lead me, as it were, towards the southeast,[1] and having soon brought me out of the darkness, conducted me into an atmosphere of serene light. While he thus led me in open light, I saw a vast wall before us, the length and height of which, in every direction, seemed to be altogether boundless. I began to wonder why we went up to the wall, seeing that I could discover no door, or window, or means of ascent. When we came to the wall, we were presently, I know not by what means, on the top of it, and within it was a vast and delightful field, so full of fragrant flowers that the sweetness of its delightful odor immediately dispelled the stench of the dark furnace, which had penetrated me in every part. So great was the light in this place that it seemed to exceed the brightness of the day, or the sun in its meridian height. In this field were innumerable assemblies of men in white, and many companies seated together rejoicing. As he led me through the choirs of those blissful inhabitants, I began to think that this might perhaps be the kingdom of heaven, of which I had often heard so many sermons. He answered my thought, saying, "No, this is not the kingdom of heaven, as you imagine."

'When we had passed those abodes of blessed souls and gone further on, I discovered in front of us a much more beautiful light, and therein heard sweet voices of persons singing; and so wonderful a fragrance proceeded from the

[1] On the southeast as the quarter of felicity, see Cook's edition of Cynewulf's *Christ*, note on l. 900, and Lactantius, *Inst. Div.* 2. 9.

place that the other, which I had before thought most delicious, then seemed to me but very indifferent; even as that extraordinary brightness of the flowery field, compared with this, appeared mean and inconsiderable. When I began to hope we should enter that delightful place, my guide on a sudden stood still; and then retracing his steps, led me back by the way we came.

'When we returned to those joyful mansions of the spirits in white, he said to me: "Do you know what all these things are which you have seen?" I answered, I did not; and then he replied: "That vale you saw, so dreadful for consuming flames and cutting cold, is the place in which the souls of those are tried and punished who, delaying to confess and amend their crimes, at length have recourse to repentance at the point of death, and so depart this life; but nevertheless because they even at their death confessed and repented, they shall all be received into the kingdom of heaven at the day of judgment; but many are relieved, even before the day of judgment, by the prayers,[1] alms, and fasting of the living, and more especially by the celebration of masses. That fiery and foul-smelling pit which you saw is the mouth of hell, into which whosoever falls shall never be delivered to all eternity. This flowery place, in which you see these most beautiful young people, so resplendent and joyful, is that into which the souls of those are received who depart the body in good works, but who are not so perfect as to deserve to be immediately admitted into the kingdom of heaven; yet they shall all, at the day of judgment, have the vision of Christ, and enter into the joys of His kingdom. But they who are perfect in thought, word, and deed, as soon as they depart the body immediately

[1] Plummer compares Dante, *Purg.* 3. 140–1.

enter into the kingdom of heaven, in the neighborhood whereof that place is where you heard the sound of sweet singing, with the odor of sweetness and splendor of light. As for you, who are now to return to the body, and live again among men, if you will endeavor strictly to examine your actions, and direct your speech and behavior in righteousness and simplicity, you shall after death have a place of residence among these joyful troops of blessed souls which you behold; for when I left you for a while, it was to know how you were to be disposed of." When he had said this to me, I much abhorred returning to my body, being delighted with the sweetness and beauty of the place I beheld, and with the company of those I saw in it. However, I durst not ask my guide any questions; but in the meantime, on a sudden, I know not how, I find myself alive among men.'

Now these and other things which this man of God saw, he would not relate to slothful persons and such as lived carelessly, but only to those who, being terrified with the dread of torments, or delighted with the hope of everlasting joys, wished to make use of his words to advance in piety. In the neighborhood of his cell lived one Hæmgils, a monk, eminent too in the priesthood, as his good works alone might testify. This man is still living, and leading a solitary life in Ireland, supporting his extreme old age on bread and cold water. He often went to that man, and by asking numerous questions, heard from him all the particulars of what he had seen when separated from his body; by whose recital I also came to the knowledge of the few facts which I have briefly set down. He also related his visions to King Aldfrith,[1] a man

[1] Whom Bright calls (*Early Eng. Church Hist.*, p. 338) 'the first of our literary kings,' and Plummer (2. 263) 'the philosopher-king.'

most learned in all respects, and was by him so willingly and attentively heard that at his request he was admitted into the monastery above mentioned, and received the monastic tonsure; and the said king, when he happened to be in those parts, very often went to hear him. At that time the religious and modest abbot and priest, Æthelwald,[1] presided over the monastery, and now with worthy conduct occupies the episcopal see of the church of Lindisfarne.

He had a private place of residence assigned him in that monastery, where he might freely apply himself to the service of his Creator in continual prayer. And as that place lay on the bank of the river, he was wont to go frequently into the same for the chastening of his body, and many times to dip quite under the water, and to continue saying Psalms or prayers therein as long as he could endure it, standing still sometimes up to the middle, and sometimes to the neck in water; and when he went out from thence ashore, he never took off his cold and frozen garments till they grew warm and dry on his body. And when in winter the half-broken pieces of ice were swimming about him, which he had sometimes broken in order to make room to stand or dip himself in the river, those who beheld it would say, 'It is wonderful, brother Dryhthelm (for so he was called), that you are able to endure such violent cold'; but he would simply answer, for he was a man of simple wit and moderate nature, 'I have seen greater cold.' And when they would

[1] He became Bishop of Lindisfarne ca. 721, and died in 740, or earlier. As bishop, he provided a cover for the famous Lindisfarne Gospels, or Durham Book (Brit. Mus. Cott. Nero D, IV); on this see Cook, *Biblical Quotations in Old English Prose Writers* 1 (1898) xliv ff. Plummer says of it (2. 298): 'No facsimile can give any idea of the exquisite beauty of the original. It is the fairest MS. that has ever come under my notice.'

say, 'It is strange that you will endure such austerity'; he would reply, 'I have seen greater austerity.' Thus he continued, through an indefatigable desire of heavenly bliss, to subdue his aged body, with the addition of daily fasting, till the day of his being called away; promoting the salvation of many by his words and manner of life.

J. A. Giles, revised

## SELECTIONS FROM THE *OLD ENGLISH CHRONICLE*

Four versions of the famous series of chronological records known as the *Old English Chronicle* have been preserved in seven manuscripts. These were kept in various places, such as Canterbury, Winchester, and Peterborough, but the earlier portions of them (to the year 892) are all closely related to one original draft. This, in turn, was probably based on earlier local chronicles, combined and supplemented by order of King Alfred. The entries begin with an account of the invasion of Britain by Julius Cæsar, 'sixty years before the incarnation of Christ,' but this, like the notes immediately following (A.D. 1–448), is a comparatively late interpolation. Nothing of any length or particular value antedates 449, and it is doubtful whether any contemporary entries were made in the original chronicles before 600. The early records depend largely on Bede's *History*. The last entry is under date of 1154.

A peculiarity of the records of the tenth century is the occasional insertion of poems, chief among which are *The Battle of Brunanburh* and *The Battle of Maldon* (*Select Translations from Old English Poetry*, Boston, 1902, pp. 26, 31). Only occasionally, however, does the *Chronicle* rise above the plane of bald prose. Plummer says in his masterly edition, *Two of the Saxon Chronicles Parallel* (Oxford, 1892–9): 'In their laconic annals much was implied, and little expressed. . . . To posterity they present merely a name or two, as of a battle-field and a victor, but to the men of the day they suggested a thousand particulars, which they, in their comrade-life, were in the habit of recollecting and

putting together. . . .' And again: 'A numerical list of years was prepared, with a blank space, generally only a single line, opposite each number. The smallness of the space shows that nothing great was designed, but only a year-mark to know and distinguish the year by' (2. xxi–xxii).

The *Chronicle* shares with Bede's *Ecclesiastical History* the distinction of being the chief source for the history of England before the twelfth century. Even so early a writer as Asser translates from the *Chronicle* (cf. pp. 89 ff.). A modern translation may be found in Thorpe's edition (Rolls Series, London, 1861), or one by Giles, in the Bohn series, from which, with occasional changes, our extracts are taken.

A.D. 1. Octavianus reigned fifty-six years, and in the forty-second year of his reign Christ was born.

A.D. 33. This year Christ was crucified, being from the beginning of the world about five thousand two hundred and twenty-six years.

A.D. 199. In this year the Holy Rood was found.

A.D. 449. This year Martianus and Valentinus[1] succeeded to the empire, and reigned seven years. And in their days Hengist and Horsa, invited by Vortigern, King of the Britons, landed in Britain on the shore which is called Ebbsfleet[2]; at first in aid of the Britons, but afterwards they fought against them. King Vortigern gave them land in the southeast of this country, on condition that they should fight against the Picts. Then they fought against the Picts, and had the victory wheresoever they came. They then sent to the Angles, desired a larger force to be sent, and caused them to be told the worthlessness of the Britons and the excellences of the land.[3]

[1] For Valentinianus.

[2] Very possibly the landing-place of Augustine also; see Stanley, *Hist. Mem. Canterbury*, pp. 14–30.

[3] Cf. Bede's account, p. 14, on which the whole passage is obviously based. The entry continues with an account of the various tribes, and of the ancestry of Hengist and Horsa, much as in Bede.

A.D. 793. This year dire forewarnings came over the land of the Northumbrians, and miserably terrified the people; these were excessive whirlwinds, and lightnings; and fiery dragons were seen flying in the air. A great famine soon followed these tokens; and a little after that, in the same year, on the 6th before the Ides of January, the ravaging of heathen men lamentably destroyed God's church at Lindisfarne through rapine and slaughter. . . .

A.D. 832. This year the heathen men ravaged Sheppey.

A.D. 833. This year King Egbert fought against the men of thirty-five ships at Charmouth, and there was great slaughter made, and the Danish men maintained possession of the field.

A.D. 851. This year Ceorl the earl, with the men of Devonshire, fought against the heathen men at Wicganbeorg[1] (and there was great slaughter), and got the victory. And the same year King Athelstan and Ælchere the earl fought on shipboard, and slew a great number of the enemy at Sandwich in Kent, and took nine ships, and put the others to flight. And the heathen men, for the first time, remained over winter in Thanet. And the same year came three hundred and fifty ships to the mouth of the Thames, and the crews landed, and took London and Canterbury by storm, and put to flight Berhtwulf, King of the Mercians, with his army, and then went south over the Thames into Surrey. And there King Æthelwulf, and his son Æthelbald, with the army of the West Saxons, fought against them at Aclea, and made the greatest slaughter among the heathen army that we have heard reported to the present day, and got the victory.

[1] Possibly Wigborough, in the parish of South Petherton in Somersetshire (Stevenson), though the identification must be regarded as by no means certain.

A.D. 865. This year the heathen army sat down in Thanet, and made peace with the men of Kent, and the men of Kent promised them money for the peace. And pending the peace and the promise of money, the army stole away by night, and ravaged all Kent to the eastward.

A.D. 871. About three days after this, King Æthelred and Alfred his brother led a large force to Reading, and fought against the army, and there was great slaughter made on either hand. And here Æthelwulf the earl was slain, and the Danish men had possession of the place of carnage. And about four days after this, King Æthelred and Alfred his brother fought against the whole army at Ashdown. And they [the Danes] were in two bodies — in one were Bagsecg and Halfdene, the heathen kings, and in the other were the earls. And then King Æthelred fought against the division under the kings, and there King Bagsecg was slain; and Alfred his brother against the division under the earls, and Earl Sidrac the elder was slain, Earl Sidrac the younger, and Earl Osbern, and Earl Frene, and Earl Harold. And both divisions of the army were put to flight, and many thousands slain, and they continued fighting until night. . . . Then Alfred, the son of Æthelwulf, . . . succeeded to the kingdom of the West Saxons. And about one month after this, King Alfred, with a small band, fought against the whole army at Wilton, and put them to flight for a good part of the day; but the Danes had possession of the battle-field.

A.D. 875. That summer King Alfred went out to sea with a fleet, and fought against the forces of seven ships, and one of them he took, and put the rest to flight.

A.D. 878. This year, during midwinter, after Twelfth Night, the army [of the Danes] stole away to Chippenham, and overran the land of the West Saxons, and sat down

there. And many of the people they drove beyond sea, and of the remainder the greater part they subdued and forced to obey them, except King Alfred; and he, with a small band, with difficulty retreated to the woods and to the fastnesses of the moors. And the same winter the brother of Hingwar and of Halfdene came with twenty-three ships to Devonshire in Wessex, and he was there slain, and with him eight hundred and forty men of his army, and there was taken the war-flag which they called the Raven. After this, at Easter, King Alfred with a small band constructed a fortress at Athelney, and from this fortress, with that part of the men of Somerset which was nearest to it, from time to time fought against the army. Then in the seventh week after Easter he rode to Brixton, on the east side of Selwood, and there came to meet him all the men of Somerset, and the men of Wiltshire, and that portion of the men of Hampshire which was on this side of the sea; and they were joyful of his presence. On the following day he went from that station to Iley, and on the day after this to Edington,[1] and there fought against the whole army, put them to flight, and pursued them as far as their fortress; and there he sat down fourteen days. And then the army delivered to him hostages, with many oaths that they would leave his kingdom, and also promised him that their king should receive baptism; and this they accordingly fulfilled. And about three weeks after this, King Guthrun came to him, with some thirty who were of the most distinguished in the army, at Aller, which is near Athelney. And the king was his godfather at baptism, and his chrism-loosing[2] was

[1] In Wiltshire (Stevenson).

[2] See the note in Cook's translation of Asser's *Life of King Alfred*, pp. 29, 30.

at Wedmore; and he was twelve days with the king, and he [King Alfred] greatly honored him and his companions with gifts.

A.D. 886. This year King Alfred occupied London. And all the English submitted to him, except those who were under the bondage of the Danish men. And then he committed the town to the keeping of Æthelred the earl.

A.D. 897. . . . That same year the armies from among the East Anglians and from among the Northumbrians harassed the land of the West Saxons, chiefly on the south coast, with predatory bands — most of all by their 'ashes,' which they had built many years before. Then King Alfred commanded long ships to be built to oppose the 'ashes.' They were full twice as long as the others; some had sixty oars, and some had more; they were both swifter and steadier, and also higher than the others. They were shaped neither like the Frisian nor the Danish, but so as it seemed to him they would be most efficient.

A.D. 901. This year died Alfred, the son of Æthelwulf, six days before All Saints' Day. He was king over the whole English nation, except that part which was under the dominion of the Danes, and he held the kingdom one year and a half less than thirty years. And then Edward, his son, succeeded to the kingdom.

A.D. 1066. In this year King Harold came from York to Westminster, at that Easter which was after the midwinter in which the king died; and Easter was then on the 16th day before the Kalends of May. Then was over all England such a token seen in the heavens as no man ever before saw. Some men said that it was the star *cometa*, which certain men call the hairy star; and it appeared first on the eve of the Greater Litany,[1] the 8th day before

[1] St. Mark's Day, April 25.

the Kalends of May, and so shone all the seven nights. And soon after came Tostig the earl from beyond sea into the Isle of Wight with as great a fleet as he might procure; and there they yielded him as well money as food. And King Harold, his brother, gathered so great a ship-force, and also land-force, as no king here in the land had before done; because it was made known to him that William the bastard would come hither and win this land; just as it afterwards happened. And meanwhile Earl Tostig came into the Humber with sixty ships; and Earl Edwin came with a land-force and drove him out. And the sailors forsook him; and he went to Scotland with twelve vessels. And there met him Harold, King of Norway, with three hundred ships; and Tostig submitted to him and became his man. And they then went both into the Humber until they came to York; and there fought against them Earl Edwin and Earl Morkere, his brother; but the Northmen had the victory. Then was it made known to Harold, King of the English, that this had thus happened, and this battle [1] was on the vigil of St. Matthew.[2] Then came Harold our king unawares on the Northmen, and met with them beyond York, at Stamford Bridge, with a great army of English people; and there during the day [3] was a very severe fight on both sides. There was slain Harold the Fair-haired [4] and Tostig the earl; and the Northmen who were there remaining were put to flight; and the English from behind fiercely smote them, until some of them came to their ships, some were drowned, and some burned; and thus in divers ways they perished, so that there were few left; and the English had possession of the battle-field.

[1] That of Gate Fulford. [2] St. Matthew's day is September 21.

[3] September 25.

[4] Wrong; it was Harold Hardrada. Harold the Fair-haired had died about 933.

The king then gave his protection to Olaf, son of the king of the Norwegians, and to their bishop, and to the Earl of Orkney, and to all those who were left in the ships. And they then went up to our king, and swore oaths that they would observe peace and friendship towards this land; and the king let them go home with twenty-four ships. These two general battles were fought within five days. Then came William, Earl of Normandy, into Pevensey, on the eve of Michaelmas [1]; and soon after they were on their way, they constructed a castle [2] at Hastings-port. This was then made known to King Harold, and he then gathered a great force, and came to meet him at the hoar apple-tree [3]; and William came against him unawares, before his people were set in order. But the king nevertheless strenuously fought against him with those men who would follow him; and there was great slaughter made on either hand. There was slain King Harold, and Earl Leofwin, his brother, and Earl Gyrth, his brother, and many good men; and the Frenchmen had possession of the battle-field, all as God granted them for the people's sins. Archbishop Aldred and the townsmen of London would then have child Edgar [4] for king, as was his true natural right; and Edwin and Morkere vowed to him that they would fight together with him. But in that degree that it ought ever to have been forwarder, so was it from day to day later and worse; so that at the end all passed away. This fight was done on the day [5] of Calixtus the pope. And

[1] September 29.

[2] Freeman (*Norm. Conquest*, N.Y. 1873, 3. 273) calls this one of those wooden fortresses 'which were so constantly run up for sudden emergencies in Norman warfare, and which often proved the forerunners of more lasting buildings of stone.' The ruins of a castle still mark the site.

[3] This was on the field of Senlac, near the site of Battle Abbey, about six miles N.W. of Hastings.

[4] Edgar Atheling.

[5] October 14.

William the earl went afterwards again to Hastings, and there waited to see whether the people would submit to him. But when he understood that they would not come to him, he went upwards with all his army which was left to him, and that which afterwards had come from over sea to him; and plundered all that part which he overran until he came to Berkhampstead. And there came to meet him Archbishop Aldred, and child Edgar, and Earl Edwin, and Earl Morkere, and all the chief men of London; and then submitted of necessity, when the most harm had been done. And it was very unwise that they had not done so before, since God would not better it, for our sins. And they delivered hostages, and swore oaths to him; and he vowed to them that he would be good lord to them; and nevertheless, while this was in progress, they plundered all that they overran. Then, on Midwinter's Day,[1] Archbishop Aldred consecrated him king at Westminster; and he gave him a pledge upon Christ's book, and also swore, before he would set the crown upon his head, that he would govern this nation as well as any king before him had at the best done, if they would be loyal to him. Nevertheless, he laid a tribute on the people, very heavy; and then went, during Lent, over sea to Normandy. . . . And Bishop Odo and Earl William[2] remained here behind, and they built castles far and wide throughout the nation, and distressed poor people; and ever after evil grew sore. May the end be good when God will!

A.D. 1087. . . . He died in Normandy the day[3] after the Nativity of St. Mary, and was buried in Caen, at St.

[1] Christmas.

[2] William Fitzosbern, Earl of Hereford. 'To Bishop Odo was entrusted the guard of Kent and the south coast, while Earl William was left to guard the northern and western borders' (*D. N. B.*).

[3] September 9.

Stephen's monastery,[1] which he had built and richly endowed. Oh, how false and untrustworthy is the good of this world! He who had been a powerful king and the lord of many lands, possessed not then, of all his land, more than the space of seven feet; and he that aforetime had been adorned with gold and with gems lay covered with mold. . . .

If any one would know what manner of man he was, what honor he had, or of how many lands he was lord, I will write of him as I have known him, I who have looked upon him, and at one time lived in his family. This King William, of whom I speak, was a very wise and powerful man, and more honored and mighty than any of his predecessors. He was mild to the good men who loved God, but severe beyond measure toward those who withstood his will. He erected a noble monastery on the very spot where God granted him to conquer England, establishing monks in it, and making it rich. In his days the great monastery at Canterbury was built, and many others besides throughout all England. Moreover, this land was filled with monks, who lived their life after the rule of St. Benedict. . . . Great state did he hold: thrice every year did he wear his crown when he was in England: at Easter he wore it at Winchester, at Pentecost at Westminster, and at Christmas at Gloucester. And at these times all the powerful men of all England were with him — archbishops and bishops, abbots and earls, thanes and knights. Moreover, he was a very stern and severe man, so that no one durst do anything against his will. He kept earls in bonds who acted contrary to his wishes. He deposed bishops from their sees, and abbots from their monasteries, he cast thanes into prison, and finally spared

[1] The Abbaye aux Hommes.

not his own brother Odo, who was a very powerful bishop in Normandy, with his see at Bayeux, and highest of all men, the king alone excepted. In England he had an earldom; and when the king was absent in Normandy, he was the first in this land; but him he put in prison. . . . He ruled over England, and so closely examined into it, by reason of his astuteness, that there was not a single hide of land in the country whose ownership he did not know, and its value, and afterward enter in his register. . . . Truly men had much hardship in his time, and very many had distress. He had castles built, and afflicted the poor. The king was very harsh, and took from his subjects many a mark of gold, and many a hundred pounds of silver; and this he took of his people rightfully or very wrongfully, and for little need. He fell into avarice, and greediness he loved above everything. He established a great deer-preserve, and passed laws that whosoever should slay hart or hind should be blinded. As he forbade the slaying of harts, so also of bears; the stags he loved as if he had been their father; and he decreed that the hares should go free. The rich grumbled, and the poor murmured, but he was so stout that he recked not of all their ill will. They must bend themselves wholly to his will, if they would have life, or land, or goods, or even his peace.

J. A. Giles, slightly revised

## SELECTIONS FROM THE OLD ENGLISH LAWS

The laws of the early kings of England are among the first extant written records in our language, although few are preserved in their original form. Among these are laws of Æthelbert (560–616), and one or two other kings of Kent, and of Ine, king of Wessex (688–726). As the first extract shows, Alfred collected and supplemented the laws of his predecessors.

The laws are among the most difficult of all Old English writings to translate intelligibly, since they are apt to consist of brief and allusive statements of penalties for various offenses, requiring to be elucidated by such a knowledge of contemporary manners and customs as must be largely supplied by inference, eked out, in some cases, by conjecture. They are, however, of importance both to the student of constitutional history and to the general student of Old English culture.

Thorpe's translation, in the *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England* (London, 1840), is superseded by Liebermann's rendering into German in his excellent edition, *Die Gesetze der Angelsachsen* (Vol. 1, Halle, 1903). Much, too, may be learned from the edition by Reinhold Schmid (2d ed., Leipzig, 1858), which has a German translation. Consult also Turk's *Legal Code of Alfred the Great* (Boston, 1893), Stubbs' *Constitutional History of England*, Kemble's *Saxons in England*, and *Essays in Anglo-Saxon Law* (by H. Adams, H. C. Lodge, E. Young, and others).

## 1. ALFRED'S STATEMENT CONCERNING HIS LAWS

[Alfred begins by quoting the Ten Commandments, and follows with various parts of Exod. 21, 22, and 23. He then quotes Matt. 5. 17, to show that Christ did not abrogate these precepts, and subjoins Acts 15. 23–9. Afterward he goes on as follows :]

What ye would not that other men should do to you, do not that to other men. From this one precept one may learn to judge righteously; he needs no other law-book. Let him simply remember that he adjudge to no one what he would not that another should adjudge to him, if he were in quest of a legal decision upon himself.

After it came to pass that many nations had accepted the faith of Christ, many synods assembled throughout the world. Such there were throughout England, after they had espoused Christianity, consisting of holy bishops and other competent councilors. In the interests of the mercy that Christ taught, they decreed that for almost every

misdeed secular rulers might without sin, and with their consent, accept a fine, which they then and there prescribed, for the first offense, except in the case of treason. To this they dared not allow mercy, since Almighty God allowed none to those who despised Him, and Christ, the Son of God, allowed none to him who betrayed Him to death; and He ordained that one should love one's lord as himself. Accordingly in many synods they prescribed fines for many human misdeeds, and in many synodical records they wrote here one penalty, and there another.

I, then, King Alfred, gathered these laws together, and commanded many of those which our forefathers held and which seemed good to me, to be written down, and many of those which did not seem good to me I rejected upon the advice of my councilors, and commanded that they be kept in another manner; for I durst not venture to set down in writing much of my own, for I knew not how much of it would please those who should come after us. But those things which I found — either of the days of Ine my kinsman, or of Offa, King of the Mercians, or of Æthelbert, who was the first of the English race to receive baptism — which seemed most just to me, those I have gathered here, and rejected the others. I, then, Alfred, King of the West Saxons, showed all these unto my councilors, and they said that it seemed good unto them all that they be kept.

### 2. OF PLOTTING AGAINST A LORD

If any one plot against the king's life, either himself or by harboring outlaws, or the men of one; let him be liable to the extent of his life and of all that he possesses. If he wish to clear himself, let him do so according to the

king's wergild.[1] So also we ordain for all degrees, whether churl or noble: — he who plots against the life of his lord, let him be liable unto him to the extent of his life and of all that he possesses; or let him clear himself according to his lord's wergild.

### 3. OF TAKING REFUGE IN A CHURCH

We also ordain unto every church that has been hallowed by a bishop this right of asylum: if a foeman reach it by running or riding, that for seven days none drag him out. But if any one do so, then let him be liable to pay the fine for breach of the king's peace, and that of sanctuary. . . .[2] If the brethren have further need of their church, let them keep him in another building, and let not that have more doors than the church. Let the head of that church take care that during this term none give him food. If he himself be willing to deliver up his weapons to his foes, let them keep him thirty days, and let them send word concerning him to his kinsmen.

### 4. OF FEUDS

We also command that the man who knows his foe to be dwelling at home fight not before he demand justice of him. If he have sufficient power to besiege his foe, and beset him within, let him keep him there seven days, and attack him not, if he will remain within. And then, after seven days, if he will surrender and deliver up his weapons, let him be kept safe for thirty days, and let word concerning him be sent unto his kinsmen and his friends.

[1] The fine which represented the value of the king's life amounted to about £120 or £125, corresponding to a vastly greater sum now.

[2] An obscure sentence is omitted.

If he flee to a church, let it be according to the privilege of the church, as we have already said above. If he have not sufficient power to besiege him within, let him ride to the viceroy and beg aid of him. If he will not aid him, let him ride unto the king before he fights. . . .

ALBERT S. COOK (through 'there another')
BENJAMIN THORPE, revised

## CHARTERS

Practically every other class of legal documents beside laws are comprised under the general term of charters. The completest collections are by Kemble, *Codex Diplomaticus Ævi Saxonici*, 6 vols., London, 1839–48; Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum*, vols. 1–3, London, 1885–93; cf. Earle, *Handbook to the Land-Charters and other Saxonic Documents*, Oxford, 1888. On the whole subject see Gross, *Sources and Literature of English History* (London and New York, 1900), pp. 204–7.

### LUFU'S WILL

The specimen here given is the will of Lufu, dating from about the middle of the ninth century. It may be found in Sweet, *Oldest English Texts*, pp. 446–7, in Kemble, 1. 299 (No. 231), and elsewhere. The last paragraph is in Cook's *First Book in Old English*, p. 265. A facsimile is given in Keller's *Angelsächsische Paläographie* (*Palæstra* 43. 2), Plate 2.

✠ I, Lufu, by God's grace a handmaid of the Lord, have been seeking and pondering about the needs of my soul, with the advice of Bishop Ceolnoth and of the monks at Christ Church.[1] I wish to bestow of the property which God has given me, and my friends have helped me to, each year sixty measures[2] of malt, a hundred and fifty loaves, fifty wheat loaves, a hundred and twenty doles of bread,

[1] Canterbury; Canterbury Cathedral is Christ Church. The dialect of the will is Kentish. [2] About 240 bushels.

one head of cattle, one hog, four rams, and two weights of bacon and cheese, on the brethren of Christ Church, for the behoof of my soul and the souls of my friends and kinsmen who have helped me to property; and let this be every twelvemonth at the Assumption of St. Mary.[1] And let whatever man holds this land of my heirs pay this, besides a measureful of honey, ten geese, and twenty hens.

✠ I, Ceolnoth, by God's grace archbishop, ratify this with the sign of Christ's rood, and subscribe myself

✠ Beagmund, priest, agree, and add my signature

✠ Beorufrith, priest, agree, and add my signature

✠ Wealhhere, priest
✠ Osmund, priest
✠ Deimund, priest
✠ Æðelwald, deacon
✠ Werbald, deacon
✠ Sifreð, deacon
✠ Swiðberht, deacon
✠ Beoruheah, deacon
✠ Æðelmund, deacon
✠ Wighelm, deacon
✠ Lufu[2]

✠ I, Lufu, the humble handmaid of God, establish and confirm the aforesaid gifts and alms from my inherited land at Mundlingham[3] to the brothers at Christ Church, and I beseech and in the name of the living God enjoin the man who has this land and inheritance at Mundlingham that he continue this donation to the end of the world. On him who shall keep and perform what I have enjoined in this document be the blessing of heaven bestowed and perpetuated; but on him who shall refuse or neglect it be the pains of hell conferred and maintained, unless he turn and make full restitution to God and to men. Farewell.

ALBERT S. COOK

[1] August 15.
[2] Written 'Lubo.'
[3] Kemble conjectures Mongeham, two miles southwest of Deal.

# II

# THE WORKS OF KING ALFRED, AND MATTER RELATING TO ALFRED

# KING ALFRED'S WORKS

King Alfred may with justice be called the father of English prose, for although England had already given birth to a noble poetic literature, no prose literature of any importance existed in the vernacular before the time of the great king. There were, indeed, various prose records, such as laws and charters, as well as certain translations of Scripture, such as Bede's (see p. 4); but nearly all prose writing that can be termed literature had been in Latin.

King Alfred's literary work is not, strictly speaking, of a creative sort, as it consists chiefly of translations from the Latin; on the other hand, it is not merely that of a plodding imitator, since, as the present extracts show, his versions are by no means literal, but are imbued with his own personality. His earlier versions are somewhat close, but as his work progresses his rendering becomes so free and individual that it can no longer be called mere translation.

Alfred's works exhibit a noticeable range of interest. They include, in Orosius, a text-book of geography and European history; in Bede, a history of England; in Boethius, a handbook of philosophy; and in Augustine and Gregory, famous ecclesiastical manuals. All of them — and the same may be said of nearly all Old English prose — are religious in coloring, and belong to what Ebert called 'the only universal literature that the world has known,' that of the mediæval church.

A feature of Alfred's versions is the prefaces, which abound in personal allusions. The preface to Gregory's *Pastoral Care* (p. 101) is often referred to as a general prologue to the king's literary work. As that passage indicates, Alfred had various assistants in his labors, and we know that a bishop, Werfrith by name, made a translation of Gregory's *Dialogues* at Alfred's request (p. 93).

The translations belong to the later period of the king's career, and the greater part of them were probably produced in the last decade of the ninth century.

Of numerous general works on Alfred by far the most critical is Plummer's *Life and Times of Alfred the Great* (Oxford, 1902). Others, interesting or valuable in various degrees, are by Pauli, translated by Thorpe (London, 1857), Hughes, the author of *Tom Brown at Rugby* (London, 1869), Macfadyen (New York, 1901), and Bowker (London, 1899). The best brief estimate by a historian of reputation is that of Freeman (*Norman Conquest* 1. 33–6), who calls Alfred 'the most perfect character in history,' and again 'the most renowned of Englishmen, the saint, the scholar, the hero, and the lawgiver.' All modern biographies repose principally upon Asser (see below), the *Chronicle* (cf. pp. 69–71), and the king's translations and prefaces (cf. pp. 100 ff.).

## SELECTIONS FROM ASSER'S *LIFE OF KING ALFRED*

The authenticity of this Life was impugned by Thomas Wright in 1841, by Sir Henry Howorth in 1876–7, and by an unknown writer in 1898, and it had become somewhat the fashion to regard it as a production of a later period, and therefore entitled to but little credence. The doubts as to its authenticity have been satisfactorily dispelled by the two eminent scholars who have most recently discussed the difficulties, Plummer and Stevenson.

The former, in his *Life and Times of Alfred the Great* (Oxford, 1902), says (p. 52): 'The work which bears Asser's name cannot be later than 974, and the attempt to treat it as a forgery of the eleventh or twelfth century must be regarded as having broken down.' The latter, in his noble edition (Oxford, 1904), remarks (p. vii): 'In discussing the work I have attempted to approach it without any bias for or against it, and throughout my endeavor has been to subject every portion of it to as searching an examination as my knowledge and critical powers would permit. The net result has been to convince me that, although there may be no very definite proof that the work was written by Bishop Asser in the lifetime of King Alfred, there is no anachronism or other proof that it is a spurious compilation of later date. The serious charges brought against its authenticity break down altogether under examination, while there remain several features that point

with varying strength to the conclusion that it is, despite its difficulties and corruptions, really a work of the time it purports to be. This result is confirmed by the important corroboration of some of its statements by contemporary Frankish chroniclers.'

Notwithstanding their general rehabilitation of the work, however, neither critic is prepared to trust it implicitly, partly on account of its manifest exaggerations and of the writer's 'Celtic imagination,' and partly because of possible interpolations and errors of transcription.

The style of the book is not uniform. The passages translated from the *Chronicle* are simpler, while in the more original parts the author displays an unfortunate tendency to a turgid and at times bombastic manner of writing.

For all matters regarding the manuscript, the earlier editions, etc., as well as for copious illustrative notes on the text, the reader is referred to Stevenson's edition. There is a translation by Cook (*Asser's Life of King Alfred*, Boston, 1906).

## 1. ALFRED'S REARING (22)[1]

He was extraordinarily beloved by both his father and mother, and indeed by all the people, beyond all his brothers; in inseparable companionship with them he was reared at the royal court. As he advanced through the years of infancy and youth, he appeared more comely in person than his brothers, as in countenance, speech, and manners he was more pleasing than they. His noble birth and noble nature implanted in him from his cradle a love of wisdom above all things, even amid all the occupations of this present life; but — with shame be it spoken! — by the unworthy neglect of his parents and governors he remained illiterate till he was twelve years old or more, though by day and night he was an attentive listener to the Saxon poems which he often heard recited, and, being apt at learning, kept them in his memory. He was a

[1] The numbers refer to the chapters of Stevenson's edition.

zealous practiser of hunting in all its branches, and followed the chase with great assiduity and success; for his skill and good fortune in this art, and in all the other gifts of God, were beyond those of every one else, as I have often witnessed.

## 2 ALFRED AND THE BOOK OF SAXON POEMS (23)

Now on a certain day his mother was showing him and his brothers a book of Saxon poetry, which she held in her hand, and finally said: 'Whichever of you can soonest learn this volume, to him will I give it.' Stimulated by these words, or rather by divine inspiration, and allured by the beautifully illuminated letter at the beginning of the volume, Alfred spoke before all his brothers, who, though his seniors in age, were not so in grace, and answered his mother: 'Will you really give that book to that one of us who can first understand and repeat it to you?' At this his mother smiled with satisfaction, and confirmed what she had before said: 'Yes,' said she, 'that I will.' Upon this the boy took the book out of her hand, and went to his master and learned it by heart, whereupon he brought it back to his mother and recited it.

## 3. ALFRED'S LOVE OF LEARNING (25)

This he would confess, with many lamentations and with sighs from the bottom of his heart, to have been one of his greatest difficulties and impediments in this present life, that when he was young and had leisure and capacity for learning, he had no masters; but when he was more advanced in years, he was continually occupied, not to say harassed, day and night, by so many diseases

unknown to all the physicians of this island, as well as by internal and external anxieties of sovereignty, and by invasions of the heathen by sea and land, that though he then had some store of teachers and writers, it was quite impossible for him to study. But yet among the impediments of this present life, from childhood to the present day and, as I believe, even until his death, he has continued to feel the same insatiable desire.

### 4. BATTLE OF ASHDOWN[1] (37–39)

Roused by this grief and shame, the Christians, after four days, with all their forces and much spirit advanced to battle against the aforesaid army, at a place called Ashdown,[2] which in Latin signifies 'Ash's Hill.' The heathen, forming in two divisions, arranged two shield-walls of similar size; and since they had two kings and many ealdormen,[3] they gave the middle part of the army to the two kings, and the other part to all the ealdormen. The Christians, perceiving this, divided their army also into two troops, and with no less zeal formed shield-walls. But Alfred, as I have been told by truthful eye-witnesses, marched up swiftly with his men to the battle-field; for King Æthelred had remained a long time in his tent in prayer, hearing mass, and declaring that he would not depart thence alive till the priest had done, and that he was not disposed to abandon the service of God for that of men; and according to these sentiments he acted. This faith of the Christian king availed much with the Lord, as I shall show more fully in the sequel.

[1] The first paragraph is chiefly from the *Chronicle* under A.D. 871; cf. p. 69.

[2] The Berkshire Downs (Stevenson).

[3] The Old English name for those whom the Danes called earls.

Now the Christians had determined that King Æthelred, with his men, should attack the two heathen kings, and that his brother Alfred, with his troops, should take the chance of war against all the leaders of the heathen. Things being so arranged on both sides, the king still continued a long time in prayer, and the heathen, prepared for battle, had hastened to the field. Then Alfred, though only second in command, could no longer support the advance of the enemy, unless he either retreated or charged upon them without waiting for his brother. At length, with the rush of a wild boar, he courageously led the Christian troops against the hostile army, as he had already designed, for, although the king had not yet arrived, he relied upon God's counsel and trusted to His aid. Hence, having closed up his shield-wall in due order, he straightway advanced his standards against the foe. At length King Æthelred, having finished the prayers in which he was engaged, came up, and, having invoked the King of the universe, entered upon the engagement.[1]

But here I must inform those who are ignorant of the fact that the field of battle was not equally advantageous to both parties, since the heathen had seized the higher ground, and the Christian array was advancing up-hill. In that place there was a solitary low thorn-tree, which I have seen with my own eyes, and round this the opposing forces met in strife with deafening uproar from all, the one side bent on evil, the other on fighting for life, and dear ones, and fatherland. When both armies had fought bravely and fiercely for a long while, the heathen, being unable by God's decree longer to endure the onset of the Christians, the larger part of their force being slain, betook themselves to shameful flight. There fell one of the two

[1] This sentence is supplied by Stevenson from Florence of Worcester.

heathen kings and five ealdormen; many thousand of their men were either slain at this spot or lay scattered far and wide over the whole field of Ashdown. Thus there fell King Bagsecg, Ealdorman Sidroc the Elder and Ealdorman Sidroc the Younger, Ealdorman Osbern, Ealdorman Fraena, and Ealdorman Harold; and the whole heathen army pursued its flight, not only until night, but until the next day, even until they reached the stronghold from which they had sallied. The Christians followed, slaying all they could reach, until it became dark.

### 5. ALFRED'S VARIED PURSUITS (76)

In the meantime, the king, during the wars and frequent trammels of this present life, the invasions of the heathen, and his own daily infirmities of body, continued to carry on the government, and to practise hunting in all its branches; to teach his goldsmiths[1] and all his artificers, his falconers, hawkers, and dog-keepers; to build houses, majestic and rich beyond all custom of his predecessors, after his own new designs; to recite the Saxon books, and especially to learn by heart Saxon poems, and to make others learn them, he alone never ceasing from studying most diligently to the best of his ability. He daily attended mass and the other services of religion; recited certain psalms, together with prayers, and the daily and nightly hour-service; and frequented the churches at night, as I have said, that he might pray in secret, apart from others. He bestowed alms and largesses both on natives and on foreigners of all countries; was most affable and agreeable to all; and was skilful in the investigation of things unknown.[2] Many Franks, Frisians, Gauls, heathen, Welsh,

[1] Cf. Alfred's Jewel, and the book upon it by Professor Earle.

[2] Cf. the account of the voyages of Ohthere and Wulfstan, pp. 109 ff.

Irish, and Bretons, noble and simple, submitted voluntarily to his dominion; and all of them, according to their worthiness, he ruled, loved, honored, and enriched with money and power, as if they had been his own people. Moreover, he was sedulous and zealous in the habit of hearing the divine Scriptures read by his own countrymen, or if by any chance it so happened that any one arrived from abroad, would hear prayers in company with foreigners. His bishops, too, and all the clergy, his ealdormen and nobles, his personal attendants and friends, he loved with wonderful affection. Their sons, too, who were bred up in the royal household, were no less dear to him than his own; he never ceased to instruct them in all kinds of good morals, and, among other things, himself to teach them literature night and day. But as if he had no consolation in all these things, and suffered no other annoyance either from within or without, he was so harassed by daily and nightly sadness that he complained and made moan to the Lord, and to all who were admitted to his familiarity and affection, that Almighty God had made him ignorant of divine wisdom and of the liberal arts; in this emulating the pious, famous, and wealthy Solomon, king of the Hebrews, who at the outset, despising all present glory and riches, asked wisdom of God, and yet found both, namely, wisdom and present glory; as it is written, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.'[1] . . . He would avail himself of every opportunity to procure assistants in his good designs, to aid him in his strivings after wisdom, that he might attain to what he aimed at; and, like a prudent bee, which, rising in summer at early morning from her beloved cells, steers her course with rapid flight along the

[1] Matt. 6. 33.

uncertain paths of the air, and descends on the manifold and varied flowers of grasses, herbs, and shrubs, essaying that which most pleases her, and bearing it home, he directed the eyes of his mind afar, and sought that without which he had not within, that is, in his own kingdom.

### 6. ALFRED'S SCHOLARLY ASSOCIATES: WERFRITH, PLEGMUND, ÆTHELSTAN, AND WERWULF (77)

But God at that time, as some consolation to the king's benevolence, enduring no longer his kindly and just complaint, sent as it were certain luminaries, namely, Werfrith, bishop of the church of Worcester, a man well versed in divine Scripture, who, by the king's command, was the first to interpret with clearness and elegance the books of the *Dialogues* of Pope Gregory and Peter, his disciple, from Latin into Saxon, sometimes putting sense for sense; then Plegmund, a Mercian by birth, archbishop of the church of Canterbury, a venerable man, endowed with wisdom; besides Æthelstan and Werwulf, learned priests and clerks, Mercians by birth. These four King Alfred had called to him from Mercia, and he exalted them with many honors and powers in the kingdom of the West Saxons, not to speak of those which Archbishop Plegmund and Bishop Werfrith had in Mercia. By the teaching and wisdom of all these the king's desire increased continually, and was gratified. Night and day, whenever he had any leisure, he commanded such men as these to read books to him — for he never suffered himself to be without one of them — so that he came to possess a knowledge of almost every book, though of himself he could not yet understand anything of the books, since he had not yet learned to read anything.

### 7. HOW ALFRED REWARDED SUBMISSION (81)

Nor was it in vain that they all gained the friendship of the king. For those who desired to augment their worldly power obtained power; those who desired money gained money; those who desired his friendship acquired his friendship; those who wished more than one secured more than one. But all of them had his love and guardianship and defense from every quarter, so far as the king, with all his men, could defend himself. When therefore I had come to him at the royal vill called Leonaford, I was honorably received by him, and remained that time with him at his court eight months; during which I read to him whatever books he liked, of such as he had at hand; for this is his peculiar and most confirmed habit, both night and day, amid all his other occupations of mind and body,[1] either himself to read books, or to listen to the reading of others. And when I frequently had sought his permission to return, and had in no way been able to obtain it, at length when I had made up my mind by all means to demand it, he called me to him at twilight on Christmas Eve, and gave me two letters in which was a manifold list of all the things which were in the two monasteries which are called in Saxon Congresbury and Banwell, and on that same day he delivered to me those two monasteries with everything in them, together with a silken pallium of great value, and of incense a load for a strong man, adding these words, that he did not give me these trifling presents because he was unwilling hereafter to give me greater. For in the course of time he unexpectedly gave me Exeter, with the whole diocese which belonged to him in Wessex and in Cornwall, besides gifts

[1] Cf. p. 117.

every day without number of every kind of worldly wealth; these it would be too long to enumerate here, lest it should weary my readers. But let no one suppose that I have mentioned these presents in this place for the sake of glory or flattery, or to obtain greater honor; I call God to witness that I have not done so, but that I might certify to those who are ignorant how profuse he was in giving. He then at once gave me permission to ride to those two monasteries, so full of all good things, and afterwards to return to my own.

### 8. ALFRED'S MANUAL (88, 89[1])

On a certain day we were both of us sitting in the king's chamber, talking on all kinds of subjects, as usual, and it happened that I read to him a quotation out of a certain book. While he was listening to it attentively with both ears, and pondering it deeply with his inmost mind, he suddenly showed me a little book which he carried in his bosom, wherein were written the daily course, together with certain Psalms and prayers which he had read in his youth, and thereupon bade me write the quotation in that book. . . . Since I could find no blank space in that book wherein to write the quotation, it being all full of various matters, I delayed a little, chiefly that I might stir up the choice understanding of the king to a higher knowledge of the divine testimonies. Upon his urging me to make haste and write it quickly, I said to him, 'Are you willing that I should write that quotation on some separate leaf? Perhaps we shall find one or more other such which will please you; and if that should happen, we shall be glad that we have kept this by itself.'

[1] It is probable, though not absolutely certain, that these two chapters refer to the same book.

'Your plan is good,' said he; so I gladly made haste to get ready a pamphlet of four leaves, at the head of which I wrote what he had bidden me; and that same day I wrote in it, at his request, and as I had predicted, no less than three other quotations which pleased him. From that time we daily talked together, and investigated the same subject by the help of other quotations which we found and which pleased him, so that the pamphlet gradually became full, and deservedly so, for it is written, 'The righteous man builds upon a moderate foundation, and by degrees passes to greater things.'[1] . . .

When that first quotation had been copied, he was eager at once to read, and to translate into Saxon, and then to teach many others. . . . Inspired by God, he began the rudiments of Holy Scripture on the sacred feast of St. Martin. Then he went on, as far as he was able, to learn the flowers collected from various quarters by any and all of his teachers, and to reduce them into the form of one book, although jumbled together, until it became almost as large as a psalter. This book he called his Enchiridion or Handbook,[2] because he carefully kept it at hand day and night, and found, as he then used to say, no small consolation therein.

### 9. ALFRED'S TROUBLES (91)

Now the king was pierced with many nails of tribulation, though established in the royal sway; for from the twentieth year of his age to the present year, which is his forty-fifth, he has been constantly afflicted with most severe attacks of an unknown disease, so that there is not

[1] Author unknown.

[2] Still known by William of Malmesbury (d. 1143); cf. his *Gesta Pontificum*, chaps. 188, 190.

a single hour in which he is not either suffering from that malady, or nigh to despair by reason of the gloom which is occasioned by his fear of it. Moreover the constant invasions of foreign nations, by which he was continually harassed by land and sea, without any interval of quiet, constituted a sufficient cause of disturbance.

What shall I say of his repeated expeditions against the heathen, his wars, and the incessant occupations of government? . . . What shall I say of his restoration of cities and towns, and of others which he built where none had been before? of golden and silver buildings, built in incomparable style under his direction? of the royal halls and chambers, wonderfully erected of stone and wood at his command? of the royal vills constructed of stones removed from their old site, and finely rebuilt by the king's command in more fitting places?

Not to speak of the disease above mentioned, he was disturbed by the quarrels of his subjects, who would of their own choice endure little or no toil for the common need of the kingdom. He alone, sustained by the divine aid, once he had assumed the helm of government, strove in every way, like a skilful pilot, to steer his ship, laden with much wealth, into the safe and longed-for harbor of his country, though almost all his crew were weary, suffering them not to faint or hesitate, even amid the waves and manifold whirlpools of this present life. Thus his bishops, ealdormen, nobles, favorite thanes, and prefects, who, next to God and the king, had the whole government of the kingdom, as was fitting, continually received from him instruction, compliment, exhortation, and command; nay, at last, if they were disobedient, and his long patience was exhausted, he would reprove them severely, and censure in every way their vulgar folly and obstinacy; and thus

he wisely gained and bound them to his own wishes and the common interests of the whole kingdom. But if, owing to the sluggishness of the people, these admonitions of the king were either not fulfilled, or were begun late at the moment of necessity, and so, because they were not carried through, did not redound to the advantage of those who put them in execution — take as an example the fortresses which he ordered, but which are not yet begun or, begun late, have not yet been completely finished — when hostile forces have made invasions by sea, or land, or both, then those who had set themselves against the imperial orders have been put to shame and overwhelmed with vain repentance.

### 10. ALFRED JUDGES THE POOR WITH EQUITY (105)

[The king] showed himself a minute investigator of the truth in all his judgments, and this especially for the sake of the poor, to whose interest, day and night, among other duties of this life, he was ever wonderfully attentive. For in the whole kingdom the poor, besides him, had few or no helpers; for almost all the powerful and noble of that country had turned their thoughts rather to secular than to divine things: each was more bent on worldly business, to his own profit, than on the common weal.

### 11. HIS CORRECTION OF UNJUST AND INCOMPETENT JUDGES (106)

He strove also, in his judgments, for the benefit of both his nobles and commons, who often quarreled fiercely among themselves at the meetings of the ealdormen and sheriffs, so that hardly one of them admitted the justice of what had been decided by these ealdormen and sheriffs.

In consequence of this pertinacious and obstinate dissension, all felt constrained to give sureties to abide by the decision of the king, and both parties hastened to carry out their engagements. But if any one was conscious of injustice on his side in the suit, though by law and agreement he was compelled, however reluctant, to come for judgment before a judge like this, yet with his own good will he never would consent to come. For he knew that in that place no part of his evil practice would remain hidden; and no wonder, for the king was a most acute investigator in executing his judgments, as he was in all other things. He inquired into almost all the judgments which were given in his absence, throughout all his dominion, whether they were just or unjust. If he perceived there was iniquity in those judgments, he would, of his own accord, mildly ask those judges, either in his own person, or through others who were in trust with him, why they had judged so unjustly, whether through ignorance or malevolence — that is, whether for the love or fear of any one, the hatred of another, or the desire of some one's money. At length, if the judges acknowledged they had given such judgment because they knew no better, he discreetly and moderately reproved their inexperience and folly in such terms as these: 'I greatly wonder at your assurance, that whereas, by God's favor and mine, you have taken upon you the rank and office of the wise, you have neglected the studies and labors of the wise. Either, therefore, at once give up the administration of the earthly powers which you possess or endeavor more zealously to study the lessons of wisdom. Such are my commands.' At these words the ealdormen and sheriffs would be filled with terror at being thus severely corrected, and would endeavor to turn with all their might to the study of justice, so that, wonderful to say, almost all

his ealdormen, sheriffs, and officers, though unlearned from childhood, gave themselves up to the study of letters, choosing rather to acquire laboriously an unfamiliar discipline than to resign their functions. But if any one, from old age or the sluggishness of an untrained mind, was unable to make progress in literary studies, he would order his son, if he had one, or one of his kinsmen, or, if he had no one else, his own freedman or servant, whom he had long before advanced to the office of reading, to read Saxon books before him night and day, whenever he had any leisure. And then they would lament with deep sighs from their inmost souls that in their youth they had never attended to such studies. They counted happy the youth of the present day, who could be delightfully instructed in the liberal arts, while they considered themselves wretched in that they had neither learned these things in their youth, nor, now they were old, were able to do so. This skill of young and old in acquiring letters, I have set forth as a means of characterizing the aforesaid king.

ALBERT S. COOK

## SELECTIONS FROM GREGORY'S *PASTORAL CARE*

Gregory the Great (540–604) was a great favorite with authors of the Old English period, not only as the most famous of popes, the patron of monasticism, the reformer of the papal see and of the liturgy, and as one of the four great doctors of the Latin church, but also on account of his particular interest in England. The story of his life is told by Bede (*Eccl. Hist.* 2. 1; cf. pp. 23–31), and by Ælfric (*Hom.* 2. 9).

The *Cura* (or *Regula*) *Pastoralis*, a handbook on the priestly office and the art of teaching, ranks, together with his homilies, letters, and hymns, among the most important of his undoubted works. Ælfric refers to it as one that 'every priest must needs possess.' For Alcuin's opinion, see p. 269.

The *Pastoral Care* is probably the earliest of Alfred's translations; it is also the most literal, the changes consisting, in general, only of the occasional insertion of an explanatory phrase or reference. A complete translation may be found in Sweet's edition of the Old English text (London, 1871).

For material on Gregory see the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, Milman's *History of Latin Christianity*, and Dudden's *Gregory the Great* (New York, 1905).

## 1. ALFRED'S PREFACE

### This book is for Worcester[1]

King Alfred bids greet Bishop Werfrith with his words lovingly and with friendship; and I let it be known to thee that it has very often come into my mind what wise men there formerly were throughout England, both of sacred and secular orders; and what happy times there were then throughout England; and how the kings who had power over the nation in those days obeyed God and His ministers; how they preserved peace, morality, and order at home, and at the same time enlarged their territory abroad; and how they prospered both with war and with wisdom; and also how zealous the sacred orders were both in teaching and learning, and in all the services they owed to God; and how foreigners came to this land in search of wisdom and instruction, and how we should now have to get them from abroad if we were to have them. So general was its decay in England that there were very few on this side of the Humber who could understand their rituals in English, or translate a letter from Latin into English; and I believe that there were not many beyond the Humber. There were so few of them

[1] The name of the diocese and of the bishop of course varied in the different copies.

that I cannot remember a single one south of the Thames when I came to the throne. Thanks be to Almighty God that we have any teachers among us now. And therefore I command thee to do as I believe thou art willing, to disengage thyself from worldly matters as often as thou canst, that thou mayest apply the wisdom which God has given thee wherever thou canst. Consider what punishments would come upon us on account of this world, if we neither loved it [wisdom] ourselves nor suffered other men to obtain it: we should love the name only of Christian, and very few the virtues. When I considered all this, I remembered also that I saw, before it had been all ravaged and burned, how the churches throughout the whole of England stood filled with treasures and books; and there was also a great multitude of God's servants, but they had very little knowledge of the books, for they could not understand anything of them, because they were not written in their own language. As if they had said: 'Our forefathers, who formerly held these places, loved wisdom, and through it they obtained wealth and bequeathed it to us. In this we can still see their tracks, but we cannot follow them, and therefore we have lost both the wealth and the wisdom, because we would not incline our hearts after their example.' When I remembered all this, I wondered extremely that the good and wise men who were formerly all over England, and had perfectly learned all the books, had not wished to translate them into their own language. But again I soon answered myself and said: 'They did not think that men would ever be so careless, and that learning would so decay; through that desire they abstained from it, since they wished that the wisdom in this land might increase with our knowlege of languages.' Then I remembered how the law was first known

in Hebrew, and again, when the Greeks had learned it, they translated the whole of it into their own language, and all other books besides. And again the Romans, when they had learned them, translated the whole of them by learned interpreters into their own language. And also all other Christian nations translated a part of them into their own language. Therefore it seems better to me, if you think so, for us also to translate some books which are most needful for all men to know into the language which we can all understand, and for you to do as we very easily can if we have tranquillity enough, that is, that all the youth now in England of free men, who are rich enough to be able to devote themselves to it, be set to learn as long as they are not fit for any other occupation, until they are able to read English writing well: and let those be afterwards taught more in the Latin language who are to continue in learning, and be promoted to a higher rank. When I remembered how the knowledge of Latin had formerly decayed throughout England, and yet many could read English writing, I began, among other various and manifold troubles of this kingdôm, to translate into English the book which is called in Latin *Pastoralis*, and in English *Shepherd's Book*, sometimes word by word, and sometimes according to the sense, as I had learned it from Plegmund my archbishop, and Asser my bishop, and Grimbald my mass-priest, and John my mass-priest. And when I had learned it as I could best understand it, and as I could most clearly interpret it, I translated it into English; and I will send a copy to every bishopric in my kingdom; and in each there is a book-mark worth fifty mancuses. And I command in God's name that no man take the book-mark from the book, or the book from the monastery. It is uncertain how long there

may be such learned bishops as now, thanks be to God, there are nearly everywhere; therefore I wish them[1] always to remain in their places unless the bishop wish to take them with him, or they be lent out anywhere, or any one be making a copy from them.

ALBERT S. COOK

## 2. GREGORY'S PREFACE

Thou dearest brother, very friendly and very profitably thou blamedst me, and with humble spirit thou chidedst me, because I hid myself, and wished to flee the burden of pastoral care. The heaviness of which burdens (all that I remember of it) I will write of in this present book, lest they seem to any one easy to undertake; and I also advise no one to desire them who manages them rashly; and let him who desires them rashly and unrighteously fear ever undertaking them. Now I wish this discourse to rise in the mind of the learner as on a ladder, step by step, nearer and nearer, until it firmly stands on the floor of the mind which learns it; and therefore I divide it into four parts: one of the divisions is how he is to attain the dignity; the second, how he is to live in it; the third is how he is to teach in it; the fourth is how he is to desire to perceive his own faults, and subdue them, lest, having attained it, he lose his humility, or, again, lest his life be unlike his ministration, or he be too presumptuous and severe because he has attained the post of instruction; but let the fear of his own faults moderate it, and let him confirm with the example of his life his teaching for those who do not believe his words; and when he has performed a good work, let him remember the evil he has done, that his contrition for his evil deeds may moderate his joy for his good

[1] The books.

works; lest he be puffed up in spirit before the eyes of the unseen Judge, and inflated with pride, and so through his egotism lose his good works. But there are many who seem to me to be very similar in want of learning, who, although they were never disciples, yet wish to be teachers, and think the burden of teaching very light, because they do not know the power of its greatness. From the very door of this book, that is, from the beginning of this discourse, the unwary are driven away and blamed, who arrogate to themselves the art of teaching which they never learned.

### 3. OF THE BURDEN OF RULE, AND HOW THE TEACHER IS TO DESPISE ALL TOILS, AND HOW AFRAID HE MUST BE OF EVERY LUXURY (3)[1]

We have said thus much in few words, because we wished to show how great is the burden of teaching, lest any one dare undertake it who is unworthy of it, lest he through desire of worldly honor undertake the guidance of perdition. Very justly the apostle James forbade it when he said, 'Brothers, let there not be too many masters among you.'[2]

Therefore the Mediator Himself between God and men, that is Christ, shunned undertaking earthly rule. He who surpassed all the wisdom of the higher spirits, and reigned in heaven before the world was, it is written in the Gospel that the Jews came and wished to make Him king by force. When the Saviour perceived it, He dismissed them and hid Himself. Who could easier rule men without sin than He who created them? He did not shun supremacy because any man was worthier of it, but He wished to set us an example of not coveting it too much; and also

[1] The numbers in parentheses refer to the sections of the original text.
[2] Cf. James 3. 1.

wished to suffer for us. He wished not to be king, yet of His own free will He came to the cross. He shunned the honor of reigning, and chose the punishment of the most ignominious death, that we who are His members might learn from Him to shun the seductions of this world; and also that we might not dread its fear and terror, but might [1] for the sake of truth love toil, and dread luxury and therefore avoid it.[2] For through luxury men are often inflated with pride, while hardships through pain and sorrow purify and humble them. In prosperity the heart is puffed up; in adversity, even if it were formerly puffed up, it is humbled. In prosperity men forget themselves; in adversity they must remember themselves, even if they are unwilling. In prosperity they often lose the good they formerly did; in adversity they often repair the evil they long ago did. Often a man is subjected to the instruction of adversity, although before he would not follow the moral example and instruction of his teacher. But although schooled and taught by adversity, soon, if he attain to power, through the homage of the people he becomes proud and accustomed to presumption. Thus [3] King Saul at first declined the throne, and deemed himself quite unworthy of it; [4] but as soon as he obtained the rule of the kingdom, he became proud, and was angry with that same Samuel who formerly brought him to the throne, and consecrated him, because he told him of his faults before the people — since he could not control him before with their approval — and when he wished to depart from him, he seized him, and tore his clothes,[5] and insulted him.

[1] Sweet, 'and.'

[2] This is much more concise and clear in the Latin: 'Ut membra ejus videlicet discerent favores mundi fugere, terrores minime timere, pro veritate adversa diligere, prospera formidando declinare.'

[3] Sweet, 'As.' [4] 1 Sam. 9. 21. [5] 1 Sam. 15. 27.

## 4. HOW THE TEACHER IS TO BE SYMPATHIZING WITH AND SOLICITOUS ABOUT ALL MEN IN THEIR TROUBLES (16)

The teacher must be the nearest to all men and sympathizing with them in their troubles, and elevated above all with the divine foresight of his mind, that through his pious benevolence he may take on himself the sins of other men, and also by the lofty contemplation of his mind surpass himself with the desire of invisible things, and that, aspiring after such lofty things, he may not despise his weak and sinful neighbors, nor, on the other hand, through their weakness give up his lofty aspirations. . . . Therefore Moses often went in and out of the temple, because in it he was led to divine contemplation, and outside he occupied himself with the people's wants. In it he contemplated in his mind the mysteries of godliness, and brought them out thence to the people, and proclaimed what they were to do and observe. And whenever he was in doubt he ran back into the temple and asked God about it before the ark,[1] in which was the covenant of the temple, thus setting an example to those who are now rulers. When they are uncertain about anything which they are to do outside, they must return to their mind, and there ask God, as Moses did before the ark in the temple. If they still doubt there, let them go to the Holy Scriptures, and ask there what they are to do or teach. For Truth itself, that is Christ,[2] when on earth prayed on mountains and in retired places, and performed His miracles in cities, thus preparing the path of imitation for good teachers, lest they despise the company of weak and sinful men, though they themselves aspire to the highest.

[1] Cf. Exod. 25. 22; 26. 33; 31. 9, 11. [2] See John 14. 6.

Because when love descends through humanity and is occupied with the need of its [1] neighbors, it rises marvelously; and the more cheerfully it descends, the easier it ascends, signifying that those who are set above others are to appear such [2] that their subjects may not through shame fear confessing to them their secrets, that when the sinful are overwhelmed with the waves of temptation they may hasten to take refuge in the heart of the teacher for confession, like a child in its mother's bosom, and wash away the sins wherewith they think themselves polluted, with his help and counsel, and become purer than they were before, washed in the tears of their prayers.

HENRY SWEET

## SELECTIONS FROM OROSIUS' *UNIVERSAL HISTORY*

Orosius, a Spaniard of the fifth century A.D., produced at the request of St. Augustine a compendious history of the world, entitled *Historiarum Libri VII adversus Paganos* (best edition, Vienna, 1882). As this title intimates, the object of the work was to vindicate the Christian era from the charge of producing the turmoil and bloodshed then current in the Roman Empire. In this respect the work resembles Augustine's own *De Civitate Dei*. Like many mediæval chroniclers, Orosius attempts to give to his work a specious semblance of completeness and antiquity by 'beginning at the beginning.' Thus the history, after some geographical descriptions, opens with an account of Ninus, king of Assyria, who 'first began to reign in this world,' and his queen Semiramis. Thereafter follows the destruction of Sodom. Books 4–6 deal with the history of Rome. The history is brought down to the year 414 A.D.

In translating Orosius, King Alfred made numerous and important changes. He shortened the work by an entire book, omitted much of Orosius' tedious moralizing, and made at least

[1] Sweet, 'his.' [2] Sweet, 'let themselves be seen.'

one addition of the first importance, the voyages of Ohthere and Wulfstan.

Both the Old English and the Latin texts may be consulted in Sweet's edition, London, 1883. An entire modern English rendering may be found in Bosworth's edition, London, 1859.

## 1. THE VOYAGES OF OHTHERE AND WULFSTAN

This section of the *History*, entirely original with Alfred, is the *Farthest North* of the ninth century. It well displays Alfred's keen interest in exploration, in foreigners (cf. pp. 91, 92), and in ethnology, as well as his zeal in recording newly acquired knowledge. For the geography of the passage the reader is referred to Hampson's *Geography of King Alfred* in Bosworth's edition. By consulting an atlas, the reader can trace Ohthere's journey along the northern coasts of Norway and Lapland to the White Sea, and the voyage of Wulfstan in the Baltic Sea, from Schleswig along the northern coasts of Mecklenburg and Pomerania. Longfellow's poem on the subject is well known.

### Ohthere's First Voyage

Ohthere[1] told King Alfred, his lord, that he, of all the Norwegians, dwelt farthest to the north. He said that he lived in the northern part of the country, by the shore of the West Sea. Notwithstanding, the land extended yet farther to the north; but it was all waste, save in a few places here and there where Finns dwell, attracted by the hunting in winter and the sea-fishing in summer. He said that at a certain time he wished to discover how far north the land extended and whether anybody lived north of the waste. So he set out due north along the coast for three days, with the waste land to starboard and the high seas to larboard. By that time he was as far north as whale-fishers ever go. Upon this, he proceeded due north as far as he could sail in the next three days. At that

[1] Pronounce *Ocht'-hair-e* (with the *ch* as in German).

point the land curved to the east — or the sea in on the land, he knew not which; all he knew was that there he waited for a wind from the west, or somewhat from the northwest, and so sailed east, close to land, as far as he could in four days. There he was obliged to wait for a wind from due north, for at that point the land curved due south — or the sea in on the land, he knew not which. Thence he sailed due south, close to land, as far as he could in five days. At that point a great river extended up into the land. Then they turned up into this river, for they durst not sail beyond it for dread of hostile treatment, the land being all inhabited on the other side of the river. He had not encountered any inhabited land since leaving his own home, for to the right the land was uninhabited all the way, save for fishermen, fowlers, and hunters, and these were all Finns; to the left there was always open sea. The Permians had cultivated their land very well, but they durst not enter it. The land of the Terfinns was all waste, save where hunters, fishers, or fowlers encamped.

The Permians told him many stories both about their own country and about countries which were round them, but he knew not what was true, because he did not see it himself. The Finns and the Permians, it seemed to him, spoke nearly the same language. He made this voyage, in addition to his purpose of seeing the country, chiefly for walruses, for they have very good bone in their teeth — they brought some of these teeth to the king — and their hides are very good for ship-ropes. This whale is much smaller than other whales, being not more than seven ells long; but the best whale-fishing is in his own country — those are eight and forty ells long, and the largest fifty ells long. He said he was one of a party of six who killed sixty of these in two days.

Ohthere was a very wealthy man in such possessions as constitute their wealth, that is, in wild beasts. He still, at the time when he came to the king, had six hundred tame deer that he had not sold. They call these reindeer. Six of these were decoy deer, which are very valuable among the Finns, for it is with them that they capture the wild reindeer. He was among the first men in the land, though he had not more than twenty horned cattle, twenty sheep, and twenty swine, and the little that he plowed he plowed with horses. But their income is chiefly in the tribute that the Finns pay them — skins of animals, feathers of birds, whalebone, and ship-ropes made of whale's hide and seal's hide. Every one pays according to his means; the richest has to pay fifteen marten skins and five reindeer skins; one bear skin, forty bushels of feathers, a bear- or otter-skin kirtle, and two ship-ropes, each sixty ells long, one made of whale's hide and the other of seal's.

He said that the country of the Northmen was very long and very narrow. All that his man can use for either grazing or ploughing lies by the sea, and even that is very rocky in some places; and to the east, alongside the inhabited land, lie wild moors. In these waste lands dwell the Finns. And the inhabited land is broadest to the eastward, growing ever narrower the farther north. To the east it may be sixty miles broad, or even a little broader, and midway thirty or broader; and to the north, where it was narrowest, he said it might be three miles broad up to the moor. Moreover the moor is so broad in some places that it would take a man two weeks to cross it, in other places of such a breadth that a man can cross it in six days. . . .

### Wulfstan's Voyage

Wulfstan said that he set out from Haddeby,[1] arriving at Truso after seven days and nights, the ship running all the way under sail. He had Wendland [Mecklenburg and Pomerania] on the starboard, and Langland, Laaland, Falster, and Sconey on the larboard; and all these lands belong to Denmark. And then we[2] had on our larboard the land of the Burgundians [Bornholmians], who have their own king. After the land of the Burgundians, we had on our left those lands that were first called Blekinge, and Meore,[3] and Öland, and Gothland; these lands belong to the Swedes. And we had Wendland [the country of the Wends] to the starboard all the way to the mouth of the Vistula. The Vistula is a very large river, separating Witland from Wendland; and Witland belongs to the Esthonians. The Vistula flows out of Wendland, and runs into the Frische Haff. The Frische Haff is about fifteen miles broad. Then the Elbing empties into the Frische Haff, flowing from the east out of the lake [Drausen] on the shore of which stands Truso; and there empty together into the Frische Haff, the Elbing from the east, flowing out of Esthonia, and the Vistula from the south, out of Wendland. The Vistula gives its name to the Elbing, running out of the mere [the Frische Haff] west and north into the sea; therefore it [the place where it flows out of the Frische Haff] is called the mouth of the Vistula.

Esthonia [Eastland] is very large, and many towns are there, and in every town there is a king. There is also very much honey, and fishing. The king and the richest men drink mare's milk, but the poor and the slaves drink

[1] In Eastern Schleswig.

[2] So the Old English.

[3] The mainland of Sweden, opposite Öland.

mead. There is much strife among them. There is no ale brewed by the Esthonians, but there is mead enough.

There is a custom among the Esthonians that when a man dies he lies unburnt in his house, with his kindred and friends, a month — sometimes two; and the kings and other men of high rank still longer, in proportion to their wealth; it is sometimes half a year that they remain unburnt, lying above ground, in their houses. All the while that the body is within there is to be drinking and sports until the day he is burned. The same day on which they are to bear him to the pyre they divide his property, what is left after the drinking and sports, into five or six parts — sometimes into more, according to the amount of his goods. Then they lay the largest share about a mile from the town, then the second, then the third, till it is all laid within the one mile; and the smallest part must be nearest the town in which the dead man lies. Then there are assembled all the men in the land that have the swiftest horses, about five or six miles from the goods. Then they all run toward the goods, and the man who has the swiftest horse comes to the first and largest portion, and so one after another till it be all taken; and he who arrives at the goods nearest the town gets the smallest portion. Then each man goes his way with the goods, and he may keep them all; and for this reason swift horses are excessively dear in that country. When his property is thus all spent, they bear him out and burn him with his weapons and clothes. Usually they spend all his wealth, what with the long time that the corpse lies within and what with the goods that they lay along the roads, and that the strangers race for and carry off.

It is also a custom among the Esthonians to burn men of every tribe, and if any one finds a bone unburned they have to make great amends for it.

There is one tribe among the Esthonians that has the power of producing cold, and it is because they produce this cold upon them that the corpses lie so long without decaying. And if a man sets two vats full of ale or water, they cause both to be frozen over, whether it be summer or winter.

### 2. THE FOUR EMPIRES (2. 1)

The first empire was the Babylonian, where Ninus reigned. The second was the Grecian, where Alexander reigned. The third was the African, where the Ptolemies reigned. The fourth is that of the Romans, who are yet reigning. These four chief empires are, by the ineffable dispensation of God, in the four quarters of this earth. The Babylonian was the first, in the east; the second was the Grecian, in the north; the third was the African, in the south; the fourth is the Roman, in the west.

### 3. OROSIUS' DEFENSE OF CHRISTIAN TIMES (2. 1)

I wish that they who inveigh against the era of our Christianity realized what mercy there has been since the coming of Christianity, and ere that how manifold was the calamity of the world; and also that they knew how fittingly our God in former ages ordained the empires and the kingdoms, the same who is now ordaining and changing all empires and every kingdom, according as He desireth. How similar were the beginnings that the two cities had, and how similar their days were, both in good and in evil! But the ends of their empire were very dissimilar, for the Babylonians and their king lived in manifold sin and wantonness, without remorse of any kind, so that they would not mend till God humbled them with

the greatest ignominy, when He took from them both king and dominion. But the Romans, with their Christian king, served God, wherefore He vouchsafed unto them both king and dominion. The opponents of Christianity may moderate their speech, therefore, if they will remember the uncleanness of their predecessors, and their calamitous wars, and their manifold dissensions, and their savagery toward God and toward one another, so that they could bring no gentleness to pass until relief came to them from that very Christianity which they now disparage so greatly.

### 4. AUGUSTUS (5. 15; 6. 1)

Thereafter the whole world chose to accept the peace and friendship of Augustus; and to all men naught seemed so good as to attain his favor and be subject unto him. Hence no nation desired to keep its own laws, save in the way Augustus bade them. Then were the gates of Janus closed again, and his locks grew rusty as they had never been before. In the same year when all this came to pass — the two and fortieth year of Augustus' reign — He was born who brought peace to all the world, our Lord and Saviour Christ.[1] . . . And thereafter Rome prospered greatly for twelve years, as long as Augustus maintained that humble attitude toward God that he had at the beginning — that is, in forbidding men to call him god, as had none of the kings before him, who wished, rather, that men should worship them and sacrifice to them.

CHAUNCEY B. TINKER

[1] Orosius is largely responsible for the currency of this view, which is reflected in Milton's *Ode on the Morning of Christ's Nativity* 53 ff.:

No war, or battle's sound, etc.

## SELECTIONS FROM BOETHIUS' *CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY*

Anicius Manlius Torquatus Severinus Boethius (ca. 480–524), a Roman patrician and consul in the reign of Theodoric, was one of the most noted men of the Middle Ages. Although not much more than a nominal Christian, he became identified, in the minds of mediæval churchmen, with the opponents of the Arian heresy, and was canonized in the eighth century as St. Severinus. He translated many of the works of Plato and Aristotle, and these, together with his commentaries upon them, exercised a great influence upon mediæval philosophy, as well as upon his greatest work, the famous *Consolation of Philosophy*. This book, said to have been written during his imprisonment by Theodoric, is preserved in hundreds of manuscripts, and was regarded as the standard handbook of philosophy until the Renaissance. Among its translators are, besides Alfred, Chaucer, Jean de Meun (one of the authors of the *Roman de la Rose*), and Queen Elizabeth. It was a favorite with Dante, being one of two works which he read for consolation after the death of Beatrice; it is often quoted or mentioned in his prose (see Toynbee's *Dante Dictionary*, Oxford, 1898). Dante places Boethius in the Heaven of the Sun (*Paradise* 10. 121 ff.). Among other writers who have felt his influence are Boccaccio, Gower, the Chaucerian imitators of the fifteenth century, Scaliger, Sir Thomas More, and Spenser. The *Consolation* was one of the first books printed.

King Alfred's version of the *Consolation* is one of his freest — filled with explanatory remarks, translations from scholia, and original thoughts. These are indicated in the text by italics. The Christian coloring of the work is due in part to Alfred, and in part to the effect of glosses upon the original text.

For the original Latin text, see Peiper's edition (Leipzig, 1871), or Fortescue and Smith's (1924). The standard edition of Alfred's version is Sedgefield's (Oxford, 1899); see also Sedgefield's introduction to his translation of the same work (Oxford, 1900).

There are modern translations from the Latin by James (London, 1897), Cooper (*Temple Classics*), and others. Stewart's *Boethius: an Essay* (London, 1891) is a suggestive book.

## 1. ALFRED'S PREFACE

King Alfred was the translator of this work, and turned it from the Latin of the books into English, as is now done. Sometimes he put word for word, sometimes meaning for meaning, as he could interpret most clearly and intelligibly, on account of the sundry and manifold worldly duties which often beset him both in mind and in body. It is very hard for us to enumerate the cares which in his day came upon the kingdoms he had acquired; but nevertheless he studied this book, and translated it from Latin into English, and turned it afterwards into verse, as is now done. And now he prays and in God's name beseeches every one who desires to read this book to pray for him, and not to blame him if he understands it better than he [Alfred] could; because each man, according to the measure of his understanding and according to his leisure, must speak that which he speaks and do that which he does.

## 2. ALFRED'S ACCOUNT OF BOETHIUS (1)

*At the time when the Goths from the country of Scythia waged war against the Roman Empire, with their kings Radagaisus and Alaric, they seized the city of Rome, and reduced to subjection all the kingdom of Italy which lies between the mountains and the island of Sicily. After the aforesaid kings, Theodoric came to the throne. This Theodoric was an Amuling*[1]*; he was a Christian, but persisted in the Arian heresy. He vowed friendship to the Romans, and that they should remain in possession of their former rights; but he kept that promise very poorly, and came to a*

[1] Of the royal race of the Amals.

*grievous end by a great crime; this was that, in addition to innumerable other ill deeds, he had Pope John put to death. At that time there was a certain consul — 'heretoga,' as we say — who was named Boethius; he was exceeding wise in knowledge of books and in the ways of the world. He observed the manifold wrongs which King Theodoric was committing against Christianity and against the Roman senators. Then he recalled the favors and the ancient rights which they had had under the Cæsars, their former lords; and he began to meditate and to ponder within himself how he could take the kingdom from the unrighteous king, and bring it under the control of orthodox and righteous men. Then he secretly sent letters to the emperor at Constantinople, the chief city of the Greeks and their royal seat, because the emperor was of the family of their former lords. In these they besought him to help them to their Christian faith and their former rights. When the cruel King Theodoric learned this, he gave orders to cast him into prison, and there keep him in ward. Now when it came to pass that this excellent man fell into such distress, he was troubled in spirit by so much the more as his mind had been the more accustomed to worldly prosperity; and in prison he took no thought of comfort, but fell down prone upon the ground and prostrated himself in anguish and despair, and began to bewail; and he sang thus.*

### 3. OF TRUE RICHES (7)

'All true riches and true honor are mine own servants, and wheresoever I am, they are with me. . . . My servants are wisdom and skill and true riches. My delight was always with these servants; with them I encompass the whole heaven, and I bring the lowest to the highest, and

the highest to the lowest; that is, I bring humility to heaven and heavenly grace to the humble. *But when I ascend with my servants, then we scorn this tempestuous world, like as the eagle when in stormy weather he mounts above the clouds, so that the tempest can not harm him.*'

## 4. THE GOLDEN AGE (15)

When Reason had uttered this speech, he began to sing, and spoke thus: 'Oh, how blessed was the former age of this world,[1] when to every man there seemed enough in the fruits of the earth. There were no costly dwellings nor diverse sweetmeats nor drinks, nor did they desire rich garments, *for as yet these things were not, nor were they seen or heard of. They cared not for luxury, but very temperately followed nature. They always ate but once in the day*, and that toward evening. They ate the fruit of

[1] This passage is the chief source of Chaucer's poem, *The Former Age*, of which the first stanza runs:

> A blisful lyf, a paisible and a sweet
> Ledden the peples in the former age;
> They helde hem payed of fruites that they ete,
> Which that the feldes yave hem by usage;
> They ne were nat forpampred with outrage;
> Unknowen was the quern and eek the melle;
> They eten mast, hawes, and swich pounage,
> And dronken water of the colde welle.

Chaucer's prose version is: 'Blisful was the first age of men. They helden hem apayed with the metes that the trewe feldes broughten forth. They ne distroyede nor deceivede nat hemself with outrage. They weren wont lightly to slaken hir hunger at even with acornes of okes. They ne coude nat medly the yifte of Bachus to the cleer hony.'

These all repose upon the Latin lines:

> Felix nimium prior ætas
> Contenta fidelibus arvis,
> Nec inerti perdita luxu,
> Facili quæ sera solebat
> Jejunia solvere glande.
> Non Bacchica munera norant
> Liquido confundere melle.

trees and plants; they drank no unmixed wine, nor did they know how to mingle any liquid with honey; they did not care for silken garments of diverse hues. They always slept out in the shade of the trees; they drank the water of pure springs. No merchant had seen island or coast, *nor yet had any man heard of a fleet of ships*, nor even speech about battle. The earth was not yet defiled with the blood of the murdered; there was not even a man wounded. *Men of evil will were not yet seen; they had no honor, and no man loved them.* Alas that our age can not become such! But now man's greed is as flaming as the fire *in hell, which is in the mountain of Ætna, on the island of Sicily. That mountain is ever burning with brimstone; it consumes all the places round about.* Alas, what that first miser was who began to delve in the earth for gold and gems, and found the perilous treasure which before was hidden and covered by the earth!'

### 5. OF WORLDLY POWER (16)

When Wisdom had sung this song, he began again to speak, and said thus: 'What more can I say of the honor and power of this world? For power ye would exalt yourselves to heaven, if ye could. *That is because ye remember not nor understand the heavenly power and honor; it is your own, and thence ye came.* Lo, now, if your riches and your power, *which indeed ye call honor*, came to the worst of men, *and to him who is of all most unworthy (as recently it did to this same Theodoric, and formerly to the Emperor Nero, and often also to many like them), will he not do as they did and still do, — destroy and lay waste all the regions which are subject to him or anywhere near, just as the fiery flame does the dry field of heath, or again as*

*the burning brimstone consumes the mount which we call Ætna, which is in the island of Sicily, or* like unto the great flood *which was of yore in the days of Noah?* I think that thou mayst recall that of old, *in the days of Tarquin,* your forefathers, the Roman senators, first banished the royal title from the city of Rome because of the pride *of that haughty king.* And again, likewise on account of their pride, they would have driven out the consuls who previously had banished him (but they could not); *because the later power of the consuls pleased the Roman senators still less than the former power of the kings.* If, then, it ever happens, as it very seldom does, that power and honor come to a good and wise man, what is there estimable except the goodness and honor of the good king himself, and not at all of the power? Because power is never good unless he is good who has it; therefore it is the good of the man, not of the power, if power is good. *Hence it is that no one by reason of his authority attains to virtue and excellence, but by reason of his virtue and excellence attains to authority and power. No man is better for his power, but because of his virtue he is good, if he is good, and because of his virtue he is worthy of power, if he is worthy of it. Learn therefore wisdom, and when ye have learned, do not despise it. For verily I say unto you that ye may thereby attain to power, though ye do not desire it. Ye have no need to be anxious for power, nor to press toward it. If ye are wise and good, it will follow you, though ye do not desire it.'*[1]

[1] Cf. Lowell, *Hebe* 25–28:

> Coy Hebe flies from those that woo,
> And shuns the hands would seize upon her;
> Follow thy life, and she will sue
> To pour for thee the cup of honor.

### 6. A KING'S IDEAL (17)

When Wisdom had sung this song, he was silent, and the Mind answered and spoke thus: 'Behold, Reason, thou knowest that covetousness and the glory of earthly power were never pleasing to me, nor did I at all desire this earthly authority; *but I wished tools and material for the work which was enjoined on me to do; that was, virtuously and fittingly to wield and exercise the power which was entrusted to me. Now thou knowest that no one can manifest any skill nor exercise or wield any power without tools and material; that is, the material of each craft without which it can not be exercised. The material of the king, and the tools with which to rule, are a well-peopled land; he ought to have men for prayer, men for war, and men for labor. Lo, thou knowest that without these tools no king can manifest his skill. This also is his material — to have, in addition to these tools, provision for these three classes. Now their provision is this: land to dwell in, and gifts and weapons and meat and ale and raiment, and whatsoever these three classes require. Without these he can not preserve his tools, nor without his tools do any of those things which are enjoined on him to do.* Therefore I desired material with which to exercise power, that my skill and power should not be forgotten and lost sight of. *For every kind of skill and power quickly grows old, and is passed over in silence, if it is devoid of wisdom; because no one can manifest any skill without wisdom, since whatsoever is done foolishly can never be accounted as skill. Now to speak most briefly, this it is that I have desired — to live worthily while I lived, and after my life to leave to the men who should follow me my memory in good deeds.*'

## 7. THE EMPTINESS OF FAME (19)

When Wisdom had uttered this speech, he began to chant, and sang thus:

'Whosoever wishes to have false fame and vain glory, let him behold on the four sides of him how spacious is the vault of heaven, and how narrow is the space of earth, though to us it seems wide. Then he may be ashamed of the extent of his fame, since he can not even spread it over this narrow earth. Ah ye proud, why do ye desire to bear this deadly yoke upon your necks? Or why do ye labor so vainly to extend your fame among many peoples? Though indeed it should come to pass that the uttermost peoples extol your name and praise you in many tongues, and though a man wax great because of the nobility of his birth, and prosper in all riches and all glory, yet death cares not for such things, but despises the noble, and devours the rich and the poor alike, and brings them to one level. Where are now the bones of the *famous and wise goldsmith, Wayland? I said "the wise" for this reason, because the skilful can never lose his skill, nor can it be taken from him more easily than the sun can be removed from its station. Where now are the bones of Wayland, or who knows now where they were? Or where now is the famous and sagacious Roman consul, who was called Brutus, by another name Cassius? Or the wise and steadfast Cato, who was also a Roman consul? He was recognized as a philosopher. Have not these long vanished? and no man knows where they now are.* What is now left of them except a little fame, and a name written with few letters? And yet worse, we know many famous men departed, worthy to be remembered, of whom very few have any knowledge. But many lie dead, entirely forgotten, so

that not even fame makes them known. Though ye think and desire to live long here in this world, in what shall it be better for you? Does not death still come, though he come late, and take you from this world? And what avail then will glory be to you, at least to those whom the second death[1] will seize and hold for ever?

## 8. THE UNSPEAKABLE POWER OF GOD (33)

O Lord, how great and how wonderful Thou art, Thou who didst marvelously fashion all Thy creatures, visible and invisible, and by reason dost govern them; Thou who didst establish the seasons in order from the beginning of the world unto the end, so that they go forth and return again; *Thou who governest all moving things according to Thy will, and Thyself abidest ever at rest and unchangeable! For there is none mightier than Thou, nor none Thine equal; nor did any necessity teach Thee to make that which Thou madest, but by Thine own will and by Thine own power Thou madest all things, although Thou hadst need of none. Very wonderful is the nature of Thy goodness, because all are one, Thou and Thy goodness; good came not from without to Thee, but it is Thine own. But all that we have of good in this world comes to us from without, that is from Thee. Thou hast no envy of anything, because there is none more skilful than Thou, nor none Thine equal; for by Thine own thought Thou didst conceive and create all good.* No man set Thee an example, for there was none before Thee who made or unmade. But Thou madest all things very good and very fair, and Thou Thyself art the supreme good and the fairest. As Thou Thyself didst conceive, Thou didst create this world;

[1] Cf. Rev. 20. 14.

and Thou rulest it as Thou wilt, and distributest all good as Thou wilt. *And Thou didst fashion all creatures like one another, and also in some things unlike. Though Thou hast called all creatures by one name, naming them together and calling them the world, yet that one name Thou didst divide among four elements; one of these is earth, the second water, the third air, the fourth fire. To each of these Thou appointedst its own separate place, and yet each is named with the other, and united in harmony by Thy command, so that none overstepped the bound of the other, and cold endured heat, and wet dry. The nature of earth and of water is cold; the earth is dry and cold, and the water wet and cold. The air is defined as cold and wet and warm. This is not strange, as it is made in the middle between the dry, cold earth and the hot fire. The fire is uppermost above all these earthly elements. Wonderful is Thy thought that Thou hast accomplished both — hast distinguished the elements among themselves and hast also mingled them; the dry, cold earth under the cold, wet water, so that the yielding and flowing water has a floor on the steadfast earth, since it can not stand alone. But the earth holds it, and in part consumes it, and by that draught is moistened, so that it grows and blossoms and brings forth fruit; because if the water did not moisten it, it would wither and be scattered by the wind like dust or ashes. No one living could enjoy the earth or the water, nor dwell in either on account of cold, if Thou didst not mingle them somewhat with fire. With wonderful skill Thou hast contrived that fire does not destroy water and earth, since it is mingled with both; nor, on the other hand, do water and earth entirely quench the fire. The water's own place is on the earth, and also in the air, and again above the sky.*[1] *But*

[1] Cf. Gen. 1. 7.

*the fire's own habitation is above all visible elements of the world, and yet it is mingled with all; nevertheless, it can not entirely overcome any of these, because it has not leave from the Almighty. The earth indeed is heavier and denser than the other elements, because it is lower than any other except the sky; for the sky is always outside, yet it nowhere approaches it; at every place it is equally near, both above and below. Each of these elements which we mentioned before has its own place apart, and yet each is mingled with the other, since none can exist without the other, though not discernible in it, just as earth and water are very difficult for foolish men to see or discover in fire, and yet they are mingled with it. So also there is fire in stones and in water, very hard to perceive, but yet it is there. Thou didst bind the fire with most indissoluble chains, so that it can not come to its own place, that is, to that greatest fire that is above us, lest it forsake the earth; and all other elements would perish because of the excessive cold, if it entirely departed. Thou didst establish the earth very wonderfully and firmly, so that it does not hold to one side, nor does it stand on any earthly thing, nor does anything on the earth keep it from sinking, and yet it is no easier for it to fall down than up.*

## 9. THE TALE OF ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE (35)

Once upon a time it happened that there was a harper *in the country called Thrace, in the kingdom of the Greeks. This harper, whose name was Orpheus, was extraordinarily good; he had a wife without peer, named Eurydice. It began to be said of the harper* that he could play so that the woods moved and the stones stirred because of the sweet sound, *and wild animals would run to the place and stand*

*as if they were tame, so still that they feared not though men or dogs came out against them. The harper's wife died, they said, and her soul was taken to hell. Then the harper became so sorrowful that he could not remain among other men, but betook himself to the woods, and sat on the hills both day and night,* wept, and played his harp, so that the woods trembled and the rivers stood still, and the hart did not shun the lion nor the hare the hound, *nor did any beast feel rage or fear toward any other, for joy of the sound.* When it seemed to the harper that he had no pleasure in this world, *he thought that he would seek out the gods of hell and attempt to propitiate them with his harp, and pray them to give him back his wife. When he arrived at that place, they say, the dog of hell came toward him, whose name was Cerberus; he was said to have three heads; and he began to wag his tail and to play with him on account of his harping.* There was also a very *terrible* gate-keeper *whose name was said to be Charon; he also had* three heads, *and was very old. The harper began to beg him to protect him while he was there, and to bring him out again safely. He agreed to do this, because he was delighted with the rare sound. Then he advanced* until he met the *fierce* goddesses *whom common people call Parcæ, who are said to have respect for no man,* but punish every one according to his deeds, *and are said to control every man's destiny. Forthwith he began to beg their favor,* and they in turn to weep with him. *Again he went on, and all the people of hell ran toward him and led him to their king, and all began to speak and to beg for that which he implored.* And the restless wheel to which Ixion, *the king of the Lapithæ, was bound for his guilt,* stood still *because of the harping. King* Tantalus also was quiet, *who in this world was exceeding greedy, and whom the same*

*sin of greed followed there.* And they say, the vulture ceased to tear the liver of *King* Tityus, *whom before he punished in that way. And all the torments of the people of hell stopped while he harped before the king. When he had played a long, long time,* the king of hell spoke and said: Let us give his wife to this man, for he has won her by his harping. Then he bade him to be sure not to look behind him after he was gone thence; *and he said that if he did look behind he should lose his wife.* But love can be restrained with great difficulty or not at all. Alas and alack! Orpheus took his wife with him until he came to the boundary of *light and* darkness. And his wife followed him. *But when he was come forth into the light,* he looked back toward his wife; and immediately she was lost to him.

## 10. A JOURNEY THROUGH THE HEAVENS (36)

When Wisdom had uttered this speech, he began to sing, and said: 'I have wings so swift that I can fly above the high roof of heaven. But if only I could give wings to thy mind so that thou couldst fly with me, then mightest thou survey all earthly things. If thou wert able to fly above the sky, thou couldst see the clouds beneath thee, and fly above the fire which is between the sky and the air; and thou couldst journey with the sun among the planets, and then come to the firmament, and at last to that cold star *which we call the star of Saturn. It is all of ice; it wanders above the other stars, higher than any other.* When thou art carried beyond that, then thou wilt be above the moving sky, and wilt leave behind the highest heaven. After that thou canst have thy portion of the true light. There reigns one king; He has dominion over all other kings; He directs the bridle and the rein of the whole

circuit of heaven and earth; He alone is judge, steadfast and glorious; He guides the swift chariot of all creation. But if ever thou comest along that way, and to the place which now thou hast forgotten, thou wilt say: "This is my true home; from this I first came, and here I was born; here will I now remain; never will I go hence." Yet I know if ever it happens that thou wilt or must again explore the darkness of this world, thou wilt see that unrighteous kings and all the haughty rich are very powerless and very poor wretches, even those very ones whom this unfortunate people now fears most sorely.'

### 11. THE EXAMPLE OF THE FAMOUS MEN OF YORE (40)

Hearken, ye wise men, hearken! Walk ye all in the way which ye are taught by the illustrious examples of good men and ambitious ones who were before you. Ah, ye lazy and slothful, why are ye so unprofitable and indolent? *Why will ye not inquire after the wise men and the ambitious, what they were who came before you? And when ye have learned their ways, why will ye not follow them as ye best may? For they strove after honor in this world, and labored for good report with good deeds, and set a good example for those who came after. Therefore because of their good deeds* they dwell now above the stars in joy everlasting.

### 12. THE NATURE OF THE DEITY (42)

Therefore we should with all our might inquire after God, that we may know what He is. Although it may not be in our power to know what He is, yet we ought to attempt it, according to the measure of understanding which He gives us. . . . *That alone is certainly present to*

*us which exists at this time; but to Him all is present—that which was before, and that which now is, and that which shall be hereafter; all is present to Him. His abundance does not wax, nor on the other hand does it ever wane. He never recollects, for He has never forgotten. He seeks nothing nor inquires, for He knows all. He seeks nothing, for He has lost nothing. He follows after no creature, for none can fly from Him; nor does He fear anything, for there is none more powerful, nor even any equal. He is ever giving, and in nothing grows less. He is ever almighty, for He always wills the good and never any evil. He has need of nothing. He is ever watching, and never sleeps. He is ever equally gracious. He is ever eternal, for there was never a time when He was not, nor will there ever be. He is ever free, nor is He constrained to any work. By His divine power He is everywhere present. His greatness no man can measure; yet this is not to be understood corporally, but spiritually, like wisdom and righteousness, which He Himself is. But why are ye then proud, or why do ye exalt yourselves against such lofty power? Ye can do nought against Him,* for the Eternal and the Almighty sits ever on the throne of His power. Thence He can see all, and He requites each with perfect justice, according to his deeds.[1] Therefore it is not in vain that we hope in God, for He changes not as we do. But pray to Him humbly, for He is very gracious and merciful. *Lift up your hearts to Him with your hands, and pray for that which is right and needful, for He will not refuse you.* Hate evil, and flee from it as ye best may; love virtue, and follow after it. Ye have great need always to do well, for all that ye do is done before the eternal and almighty God; He sees it all, *and He requites all.*

[1] A parallel is Rom. 2. 6.

### 13. ALFRED'S CONCLUDING PRAYER[1]

*O Lord, Almighty God, Creator and Ruler of all things, I beseech Thee by Thy great mercy, and by the sign of Thy holy cross, and by the virginity of Saint Mary, and by the obedience of Saint Michael, and by the love of all Thy holy saints, and by their merits, that Thou wilt guide me better than I have deserved from Thee; direct me according to Thy will, and according to my soul's need, better than I myself can; establish my mind according to Thy will, and according to my soul's need; strengthen me against the temptations of the devil, put far from me foul lust and all unrighteousness, and shield me from mine enemies, seen and unseen; and teach me to do Thy will, that I may inwardly love Thee above all things with a pure mind and a pure body; for Thou art my Creator and my Redeemer, my Help, my Comfort, my Trust, and my Hope. To Thee be praise and glory now and for ever, world without end. Amen.*

ELIZABETH DEERING HANSCOM

## SELECTIONS FROM ST. AUGUSTINE'S *SOLILOQUIES*

The first two books of this work are based upon the unfinished *Soliloquies* of St. Augustine (354–430), perhaps the greatest of the Latin Fathers, author of the *Confessions* and of *The City of God* (not to be confused with 'the Apostle of the Anglo-Saxons,' for whom see pp. 17–22).

This, the latest of Alfred's translations, is also the freest, Book 3 (here given entire) being well-nigh original. It is, however,

[1] There is some doubt as to the relation of this prayer to what precedes. It is 'written in a hand resembling that of the main text' (Sedgefield's ed., p. xv).

based upon various passages in other works of St. Augustine, such as the *De Videndo Deo*, as well as upon parts of Gregory's *Dialogues* and Jerome's *Vulgate*. Alfred calls the passages translated from the *Soliloquies* 'flowers' or 'blossoms.'

Some doubt has been cast upon the Alfredian authorship of this translation, owing to the late and corrupt dialect of the unique MS. in which it has been preserved; however, the vocabulary and general method of rendering — not to mention its ascription to King Alfred by William of Malmesbury in the twelfth century — seem sufficient reasons for accepting it as a genuine production of the king's. Particularly striking is its similarity to the *Boethius*.

The standard edition of the work is Hargrove's (New York, 1902); his complete translation (New York, 1904) may also be consulted.

### 1. ALFRED'S PREFACE

I then gathered for myself staves, and stud-shafts, and cross-beams, and helves for each of the tools that I could work with; and bow-timbers and bolt-timbers for every work that I could perform — as many as I could carry of the comeliest trees. Nor came I home with a burden, for it pleased me not to bring all the wood home, even if I could bear it. In each tree I saw something that I needed at home; therefore I exhort every one who is able, and has many wains, to direct his steps to the selfsame wood where I cut the stud-shafts. Let him there obtain more for himself, and load his wains with fair twigs, so that he may wind many a neat wall, and erect many a rare house, and build a fair enclosure, and therein dwell in joy and comfort both winter and summer, in such manner as I have not yet done. But He who taught me, and to whom the wood was pleasing, hath power to make me dwell more comfortably both in this transitory cottage by the road while I am on this world-pilgrimage, and also in the everlasting home which He hath promised us through Saint Augustine and

Saint Gregory and Saint Jerome, and through many other holy Fathers; as I believe also for the merits of all those He will both make this way more convenient than it hitherto was, and especially will enlighten the eyes of my mind so that I may search out the right way to the eternal home, and to everlasting glory, and to eternal rest, which is promised us through those holy Fathers. So may it be.

It is no wonder that one should labor in timber-work, both in the gathering and also in the building; but every man desireth that, after he hath built a cottage on his lord's lease and by his help, he may sometimes rest himself therein, and go hunting, fowling, and fishing; and use it in every manner according to the lease, both on sea and land, until such time as he shall gain the fee simple of the eternal heritage through his lord's mercy. So may the rich Giver do, who ruleth both these temporary cottages and the homes everlasting. May He who created both and ruleth both grant me to be fit for each — both here to be useful and thither to attain.

Augustine, bishop of Carthage, made two books about his own mind. These books are called *Soliloquies*, that is, concerning the meditation and doubts of his mind — how his Reason answered his mind when the mind doubted about anything, or wished to know anything that it could not before clearly understand.

## 2. A PORTION OF BOOK 2

*Reason.* But I would we began again where we were before. Now thou knowest that thou art, and that thou livest, and that thou knowest something, albeit not so much as thou wouldst; and a fourth thing thou wouldst also know, to wit, whether the three things all be eternal

or not, or whether any of them be eternal; or, if they are all eternal, whether any of them after this world in the eternal life shall either become worse or wane.

*Augustine.* All my yearning hast thou understood very well.

*R.* About what doubtest thou now? Didst thou not before confess that God is eternal and almighty, and hath created two rational and eternal creatures, as we before said, namely, angels and men's souls, to which He hath given eternal gifts? These gifts they need never lose. If thou now rememberest this and believest this, then knowest thou beyond doubt that thou art, and always wilt be, and always wilt love, and always wilt know something, albeit thou mayest not know all that thou wouldst. Now thou knowest about those three things that thou askedst about, namely: (1) Whether thou art immortal; (2) Whether thou shalt know something throughout eternity; (3) Whether thou, after the parting of the body and the soul, shalt know more than thou now knowest, or less. After the fourth we shall still seek — now that thou knowest the three — until thou also know that.

*A.* Very orderly thou dost explain it, but I will yet say to thee what I firmly believe, and about what I yet doubt. I do not doubt at all about God's immortality and about His omnipotence, for it can not be else respecting the trinity and the unity which was without beginning and is without end. Therefore I can not otherwise believe, for He hath created so great and so many and so wonderful visible creatures; and He ruleth them all and directeth them all, and at one time adorneth them with the most winsome appearances, while at another time He taketh away their adornments and beauties. He ruleth the kings who have the most power on this earth — who like all men

are born, and also perish like other men. Then He letteth them rule while He willeth. For such and for many such things I do not know how I can doubt His eternity; and also about the life of our souls I do not now doubt any more. But I doubt yet about the eternity of souls, whether they are immortal.

*R.* About what dost thou doubt? Are not all the holy books well-nigh full of the immortality of the soul? But methinks that too long to enumerate now in full, and too long for thee to hear.

*A.* I have heard a good deal of it, and I also believe it; but I desire rather to know it than to believe it.

*R.* I wonder why thou yearnest to know so very much and so certainly what no man in the prison of this present life ever so certainly could know as thou wishest, although many yearn to understand it more clearly in this present life than many others believe it from the sayings of these and truthful men. No one can ever understand all that he would, till the soul be parted from the body; nor indeed before Doomsday so clearly as he would. And yet the holy Fathers that were before us knew very truly about that which thou before didst ask, to wit, about the immortality of men's souls, which was so clear to them that they had no doubt, since they despised this present life[1] . . . they would be parted; and just as they endured the greatest torments in this world, so they would afterward have the greater reward in the eternal life. Through the sayings of such men we should infer that we can not understand it as clearly as they could; howbeit as regards the immortality of the soul, if thou dost not yet assent to it, I will make thee to understand it, and I will also cause thee to be ashamed that thou understoodest it so slowly.

[1] A break in the MS.

*A.* Even so do! Cause me to be ashamed therefor.

*R.* Behold, I know that thou hast to-day the lord whom thou trustest in all things better than thyself; and so also hath many a servant who hath a less powerful lord than thou hast; and I know that thou hast also many friends whom thou trustest well enough, though thou dost not trust them altogether so well as thou dost thy lord. How seemeth it to thee now, if thy lord should tell thee some news which thou never before heardest, or if he should say to thee that he saw something which thou never sawest? Doth it seem to thee that thou wouldst doubt his statement at all, because thou didst not see it thyself?

*A.* Nay, nay, verily; there is no story so incredible that I would not believe it, if he should tell it. Yea, I even have many companions, whom, if they should say that they themselves saw or heard it, I would believe just as well as if I myself saw or heard it.

*R.* I hear now that thou believest thy lord better than thyself, and thy companions quite as well as thyself. Thou dost very rightly and very reasonably, in that thou hast such good faith in them. But I would that thou shouldst tell me whether Honorius, the son of Theodosius, seem to thee wiser or more truthful than Christ, the Son of God.

*A.* Nay, verily nay; nowhere near! But methinks that it is difficult for thee to compare them together. Honorius is very good, although his father was better; the latter was very devout and very prudent and very rightly of my lord's kin; and so is he who still liveth there. I will honor them just as a man should a worldly lord, and the others of whom thou didst formerly speak just as their masters, and as one should the king who is the King of all kings, and the Creator and Ruler of all creatures.

*R.* Now I hear that the Almighty God pleaseth thee better than Theodosius; and Christ, the Son of God, better than Honorius, the son of Theodosius. I blame thee not that thou lovest both, but I advise thee to love the higher lords more, for they know all that they wish and can perform all that they wish.

*A.* All that thou sayest is true. I believe it all.

*R.* Now I hear that thou trustest the higher lord better. But I would know whether it seem to thee that thy worldly lords have wiser and truer servants than the higher lords have. Trustest thou now thyself and thy companions better than thou dost the apostles, who were the servants of Christ Himself? Or the patriarchs? Or the prophets, through whom God Himself spake to His people what He would?

*A.* Nay, nay; I trust not ourselves so well, nor anywhere near, as I do them.

*R.* What spake God then more often, or what said He more truly through His prophets to His people than about the immortality of souls? Or what spake the apostles and all the holy Fathers more truly than about the eternity of souls and about their immortality? Or what meant Christ, when He said in His gospel: 'The unrighteous shall go into eternal torments, and the righteous into life eternal'[1]? Now thou hearest what said Christ and His Apostles; and I heard before that thou didst doubt nothing of the word of Honorius and his servants. Why doubtest thou, then, about the words of Christ, the Son of God, and those of the apostles, which they themselves uttered? They spake to us more of such-like words than we can count, and with many examples and proofs they explained it to us. Why canst thou, then, not believe

[1] Matt. 25. 46.

them all, and why saidst thou before that thou wert their man?

*A.* So I say still, and say that I believe them, and also know exactly that it is all true that God either through Himself or through them said; for there are more of these occurrences in the holy books than I can ever count. Therefore I am now ashamed that I ever doubted about it, and I confess that I am rightly convinced, and I shall always be much happier when thou dost convince me of such things than I ever was when I convinced another man. All this I knew, however, before; but I forgot it, as I fear also that I shall this. I know also that I had so clean forgotten it that I should never have remembered it again if thou hadst not cited me clearer examples, both about my lord and about many parables.

*R.* I wonder why thou couldst ever suppose that men's souls were not eternal, for thou clearly enough knewest that they are the highest and the most blessed of the creatures of God; and thou knowest also clearly enough that He alloweth no creature entirely to pass away so that it cometh to naught — not even the most unworthy of all. But He beautifieth and adorneth all creatures, and again taketh away their beauty and adornments, and yet again reneweth them. They all so change, however, that they pass away, and suddenly come again and return to the same beauty and the same winsomeness for the children of men, in which they were before Adam sinned. Now thou canst perceive that no creature so fully passeth away that it cometh not again, nor so fully perisheth that it doth not become something. Now that the weakest creatures do not pass away entirely, why then supposest thou that the most blessed creature should entirely depart?

*A.* Alas! I am beset with wretched forgetfulness, so that I can not remember it as well as before. Methinks now that thou hadst explained it to me clearly enough by this one example, though thou hadst said nothing more.

*R.* Seek now in thyself the examples and the signs, and thou canst know well what thou before wouldst know, and what I explained to thee by concrete examples. Ask thine own mind why it is so desirous and so zealous to know what was formerly, before thou wert born, or ever thy grandfather was born; and ask it also why it knoweth what is now present and what it seeth and heareth every day; or why it wisheth to know what shall be hereafter. Then I suppose it will answer thee, if it is discreet, and say that it desireth to know what was before us, for the reason that it always existed since the time that God created the first man; and therefore aspireth to what it formerly was, to know what it formerly knew, although it is now so heavily weighed with the burden of the body that it can not know what it formerly knew. And I suppose that it will say to thee that it knoweth what it here seeth and heareth, because it is here in this world; and I suppose also that it will say that it wisheth to know what shall happen after our days, because it knoweth that it shall ever be.

*A.* Methinks now that thou hast clearly enough said that every man's soul ever is, and ever shall be, and ever was since God first made the first man.

*R.* There is no doubt that souls are immortal. Believe thine own reason, and believe Christ, the Son of God, and believe all His sayings, because they are very reliable witnesses; and believe thine own soul, which always saith to thee through its reason that it is in thee; it saith also that it is eternal, because it wisheth eternal things. It is not so foolish a creature as to seek that which it can not

find, nor wish for that which doth not belong to it. Give over now thy foolish doubting. Clear enough it is that thou art eternal and shalt ever exist.

*A.* That I hear and that I believe and clearly know, and I am rejoiced as I never was at anything. *Now* I hear that my soul is eternal and ever liveth, and that the mind shall ever hold all that my mind and my reason gathered of good virtues. And I hear also that my intellect is eternal. But I wish yet to know what I before asked about the intellect: whether it shall, after the parting of the body and the soul, wax or wane, or shall stand still in one place, or do as it before did in this world — for a time wax, then for a time wane. I know now that life and reason are eternal, albeit I fear that it shall be in that world as it is here in children. I do not suppose that the life there shall be without reason, any more than it is here in children; in that case there would be too little winsomeness in that life.

*R.* I hear now what thou wouldst know, but I can not tell thee in a few words. If thou wilt know it clearly, then shalt thou seek it in the book which we call *De Videndo Deo.* In English the book is called *Of Seeing God.* But be now of good cheer, and think over what thou hast now learned, and let us both pray that He may help us, for He promised that He would aid every one who called on Him and rightly wished it; and He promised without any doubt that He would teach us after this world that we might very certainly know perfect wisdom and full truthfulness, which thou mayest hear about more clearly in the book which I have before named to thee — *De Videndo Deo.*

Here endeth the anthology of the second book which we call *Soliloquies.*

### 3. BOOK 3

Then said I: Now thou hast ended the sayings which thou hast selected from these two books, yet hast not answered me about what I last asked thee, to wit, about my intellect. I asked thee whether, after the parting of body and soul, it would wax or wane, or whether it would do both as it before did.

*R.* Did I not say to thee before that thou must seek it in the book which we then spake of? Learn that book, then thou wilt find it there.

*A.* I do not care now to study all that book; but I would that thou tell me that[1] . . . the glory of the good, that their own torment may seem the more to them, because they would not by their Father's advice merit the same honors while they were in this world. And the good see also the torments of the wicked, in order that their own glory may seem the more. The wicked see God, as the guilty man who is condemned before some king; when he seeth him and his own dear ones, then seemeth to him his punishment the greater. And so also the dear ones of the king see their punishment, so that their honors always may seem to them the greater. No man ought to suppose that all those that are in hell have like torments, nor that all those that are in heaven have like glory; but every one hath according to his merits, punishment as well as glory, whichever he is in. The like have their like. Moreover, it is not to be supposed that all men have like wisdom in heaven; for every one hath it in the measure which he here merited. As he toileth better here, and better yearneth after wisdom and righteousness, so hath he more of it there; likewise more honor and more

[1] A break in the MS.

glory. Hath it now been clearly enough explained about wisdom and about the vision of God?

*A.* Yea; truly enough I believe that we need not lose aught of the wisdom which we now have, although the soul and the body part. But I believe that our intellect shall thereby be very much increased, though we can not all know before Doomsday what we would know. Howbeit, I believe that after Doomsday naught will be hidden from us, neither of that which is in our days, nor of that which was before us, nor of that which shall come after us. Thou hast now related to me many examples, and I myself have seen in the writings of the sacred books more than I can reckon, or can even remember. Thou didst show me also such reliable testimony that I can do nothing else but believe it; for if I believe not weaker testimony, then know I very little or naught. What know I except that I wish we knew about God as clearly as we would? But the soul is weighed down and busied with the body so that we can not, with the eyes of the mind, see anything just as it is, any more than thou canst see at times the sun shine, when the clouds shoot between it and thee, although it shineth very brightly where it is. And even though there be no cloud between thee and it, thou canst not see it clearly just as it is, because thou art not where it is, nor can thy body be there; nor can thy bodily eyes come any nearer there, nor even see that far. Not even the moon, which is nearer us, can we see just as it is. We know that it is larger than the earth, and yet it doth not seem at times larger than a shield on account of the distance. Now thou hast heard that we can not with the eyes of the mind ever see any thing of this world just as it is; yet from the part of it which we see we must believe the part which we do not see. But it is promised us

beyond any doubt that, as soon as we come out of this world, and the soul is released from the prison of the body, we shall know everything which we now desire to know, and much more than the ancients, the wisest of all on the earth, could know. And after Doomsday it is promised that we may see God openly — yea, see Him just as He is,[1] and know Him ever afterwards as perfectly as He now knoweth us. There shall never be any wisdom wanting to us. He who granteth us to know Himself will conceal naught from us. Howbeit, we shall know then all that we now wish to know, and also that which we do not now wish to know. We shall all see God, both those who here are worst, and those who here are best. All the good shall see Him, to their comfort, and joy, and honor, and happiness, and glory; and the wicked shall see Him just the same as the good, though to their torment, for they shall see[2] . . . might or could in this world, or whether they had any remembrance of the friends whom they left behind in this world.

Then answered he his own thoughts, and said: Why supposest thou that the departed good who have full and complete freedom shall know what they wish to know, either in this present life or in that to come? Why supposest thou that they have no memory of their friends in this world, inasmuch as the wicked Dives feared the same torments for his friends in hell as he had merited? It was he whom Christ spake of in His gospel[3] that besought Abraham to send Lazarus the beggar to him that he, with his little finger, might place a drop of water on his tongue and therewith cool his thirst. Then said Abraham: 'Nay, my son; but consider that thou didst withhold from him all comforts when ye were both in the body, thou having

[1] 1 John 3. 2. [2] Omission in the MS. [3] Lk. 16. 24 ff.

every good, and he every misfortune. He can not now do more for thy comfort than thou wouldst then do for him.' Then said the rich man: 'Abraham, if that can not be, send him to my five brethren who are still on the earth where I was, that he may tell them in what punishment I am, and may admonish them to take their warning not to come hither.' Then said Abraham: 'Nay, nay; they have the books of the holy Fathers with them on earth. Let them study them and believe them. If they do not believe them, neither will they believe Lazarus, though he come to them.'

Now we can hear that both the departed good and the wicked know all that happeneth in this world, and also in the world in which they are. They know the greatest part — though they do not know it all before Doomsday — and they have very clear remembrance of their kin and friends in the world. And the good help the good, every one of them another, as much as they can. But the good will not have mercy on their wicked friends, because the latter do not wish to depart from their evil, any more than Abraham would pity the rich man who was his own kin, because he perceived that he was not so humble to God as he ought rightly to be. The wicked, then, can neither do their friends nor themselves any good, because they were formerly, when they were in this world, of no aid either to themselves or to their friends who had passed away before them. But it shall be with them even as it is with men who are in this world brought into the prison of some king, and can see their friends all day and ask about them what they desire, albeit they can not be of any good to them, nor the prisoners to them; they have neither the wish nor the ability. Wherefore the wicked have the greater punishment in the world to come, because they

know the glory and the honor of the good, and all the more because they recall all the honor which they had in this world; and moreover they know the honor which those have who shall then be left behind them in this world.

Howbeit, the good, then, who have full freedom, see both their friends and their enemies, just as in this life lords and rulers often see together both their friends and their enemies. They see them alike and know them alike, albeit they do not love them alike. And again the righteous, after they are out of this world, shall recall very often both the good and the evil which they had in this world, and rejoice very much that they did not depart from their Lord's will, either in easy or in hidden things, while they were in this world. Just so some king in this world may have driven one of his favorites from him, or he may have been forced from the king against both their wills; then hath he many torments and many mishaps in his exile, yet he may come to the same lord whom he before was with, and there be much more worshipful than he was. Then he will recall the misfortunes which he had there in his exile, and yet not be the more unhappy. But I myself saw or [believed] what more untrustworthy men told me than those were who told what we are seeking. Must I not needs do one of two things — either believe some men or none? Methinks now that I know who built the city of Rome, and also many another thing which existed before our day, all of which I can not sum up. I know not who built the city of Rome for the reason that I myself saw it. Nor even know I of what kin I am, nor who my father or mother was, except by hearsay. I know that my father begat me and my mother bare me, but I do not know it because I myself saw it, but because it

was told me. Howbeit, not so trustworthy men told that to me as those were who said that which we now for a long time have sought for; and still I believe it.

Therefore methinks that man very foolish and very wretched who will not increase his intelligence while he is in this world, and also wish and desire that he may come to the eternal life, where nothing is hid from us.

Here end the sayings which King Alfred collected from the book which we call in . . .

HENRY L. HARGROVE

# III

# ÆLFRIC AND THE HOMILISTS

## SELECTIONS FROM ÆLFRIC

Ælfric, the foremost representative of English culture in the tenth and early eleventh centuries, was born not far from 955 A.D., and died after 1020. He was educated under Æthelwold in the Old Minster at Winchester, having probably entered it about 971. Here he remained until after the death of Æthelwold (984). By Æthelwold's successor, Ælfheah (more commonly known as Alphege), he was sent to the monastery of Cernel, or Cerne, five miles north of Dorchester, where he probably remained from 987 to 989. From Cerne he returned to Winchester, first having begun his *Homilies*, and at Winchester completed both volumes of these (990–994), his *Grammar* (995), *Lives of Saints* (996), his translation of the Pentateuch and Joshua, and his so-called *Canons* (998–1001?). In 1005 his friend Æthelmær, a wealthy and prominent thane, founded a monastery at Eynsham, five or six miles northwest of Oxford. Ælfric was probably its first abbot, and remained in office till the end of his life, composing various other works in his leisure, and being cheered by the presence of Æthelmær, who had decided to pass the remainder of his life in the monastery. Ælfric was alive in November, 1020, we are almost certain; the date of his death is conjectural. His character and temper may be inferred from the extracts given below. For further details, see Cook, *Biblical Quotations in Old English Prose Writers*, Series I (London and New York, 1898), pp. lxiv ff., and White, *Ælfric* (New York, 1898). The *Homilies* have been printed, with a translation, by Thorpe (London, 1844–6).

### 1. PREFACE TO THE TRANSLATION OF GENESIS

Ælfric the monk sends greeting in all humility to Æthelweard the earl.

When you desired me, honored friend, to translate the book of Genesis from Latin into English, I was loth to

grant your request; upon which you assured me that I should need to translate only so far as the account of Isaac, Abraham's son, seeing that some other person had rendered it for you from that point to the end. Now I am concerned lest the work should be dangerous for me or any one else to undertake, because I fear that, if some foolish man should read this book or hear it read, he would imagine that he could live now, under the New Dispensation, just as the patriarchs lived before the old law was established, or as men lived under the law of Moses. At one time I was aware that a certain priest, who was then my master, and who had some knowledge of Latin, had in his possession the book of Genesis; he did not scruple to say that the patriarch Jacob had four wives — two sisters and their two handmaids. What he said was true enough, but neither did he realize, nor did I as yet, what a difference there is between the Old Dispensation and the New. In the early ages the brother took his sister to wife; sometimes the father had children by his own daughter; many had several wives for the increase of the people; and one could only marry among his kindred. Any one who now, since the coming of Christ, lives as men lived before or under the Mosaic law, that man is no Christian; in fact, he is not worthy to have a Christian eat with him. If ignorant priests have some inkling of the sense of their Latin books, they immediately think that they can set up for great teachers; but they do not recognize the spiritual signification, and how the Old Testament was a prefiguration of things to come, and how the New Testament, after the incarnation of Christ, was the fulfilment of all those things which the Old Testament foreshadowed concerning Christ and His elect. Referring to Paul, they often wish to know why they may not have

wives as well as the apostle Peter; but they will neither hear nor know that the blessed Peter lived according to Moses' law until Christ came to men and began to preach His holy gospel, Peter being the first companion that He chose; and that Peter forthwith forsook his wife, and all the twelve apostles who had wives forsook both wives and goods, and followed Christ's teaching to that new law and purity which he himself set up. . . . I say in advance that this book has a very profound spiritual signification, and I undertake to do nothing more than relate the naked facts. The uneducated will think that all the meaning is included in the simple narrative, while such is by no means the case. . . . I dare write no more in English than the Latin has, nor change the order except so far as English idiom demands. Whoever translates or teaches from Latin into English must always arrange it so that the English is idiomatic, else it is very misleading to one who does not know the Latin idiom. . . . Now I protest that I neither dare nor will translate any book hereafter from Latin into English; and I beseech you, dear earl, not to urge me any longer, lest I should be disobedient to you, or break my word if I should promise. God be gracious to you for evermore.

ALBERT S. COOK

## 2. ENGLISH PREFACE TO THE *GRAMMAR*

*Grammar*, ed. Zupitza, pp. 2–3

I, Ælfric, after translating two books of eighty homilies, wished to translate into the English tongue this little book of grammar, since grammar is the key that unlocks the meaning of those books. And I thought that this book might help young children in beginning that art, until

they have attained to greater knowledge. It behoves every man who has any good talent to make that talent useful to other men, and to commit unto others the pound which God hath entrusted unto him,[1] in order that God's money may not lie idle, and lest he be called a wicked servant, and be bound and cast into darkness, even as the holy gospel saith. It is fitting that young men should acquire knowledge, and that the old should teach their youth wisdom, since, by means of learning, faith is kept, and every man who loveth wisdom is happy; whereas the mind of him who will neither learn nor teach, if he can, becomes cool toward holy lore, and thus, little by little, he turns from God. Whence shall come wise teachers for God's people unless they learn in youth? And how can faith increase if learning and teachers fail? Wherefore God's servants and monks must now zealously take care that holy lore neither become cool nor fail in our days, as was the case among the English a few years since, so that no English priest could either write or understand a letter in Latin,[2] until Archbishop Dunstan and Bishop Æthelwold again established learning in monastic life. Hence I say, not that this book may help many to knowledge, but that, if it pleases them, it may be, as it were, an opening to every language.

### 3. ENGLISH PREFACE TO *HOMILIES I*

I, Ælfric, monk and priest — though unequal to such offices — was sent by Æthelwold's successor, Bishop Ælfheah, in the days of King Æthelred, to a monastery called Cernel, at the request of Æthelmær the thane, whose lineage and goodness are everywhere known. Then it

[1] Matt. 25. 14 ff.; Lk. 19. 12 ff.

[2] Cf. p. 101.

occurred to me, I trust through the grace of God, to translate this book from the Latin language into the English tongue, not through confidence of great learning, but because I have seen and heard much error in many English books, which, in their innocence, unlearned men have considered great wisdom. And I regretted that they neither knew nor had the evangelical doctrines among their writings — always excepting those men who knew Latin, and save for those books which King Alfred wisely translated from Latin into English, and which are to be had. For this reason I ventured, trusting in God, to undertake this work, and also because men have need of good instruction, especially at the present time, which is the end of this world. . . . Our Lord commanded His disciples to instruct all nations [1] in the things which He Himself had taught them; but of such men there are now too few who will teach well, and set a good example. . . . Because of such commands, it seems to me that I should not be guiltless in the sight of God if I were unwilling to make known to other men, either by word of mouth or in writing, the evangelical truth which He Himself spake, and afterwards revealed to holy teachers. I know a great many in this country more learned than I, but God declares His wonders through whom He will. As an almighty Ruler, He performs His work through His chosen, not as if He needed our help, but in order that we may attain everlasting life by accomplishing His work. Paul the Apostle said, 'We are laborers together with God,' [2] and yet we do nothing for God without the help of God.

Now I beg and beseech, in God's name, if any one desires to copy this book, that he carefully correct it by the original.

[1] Matt. 28. 19. [2] 1 Cor. 3. 9.

## 4. ENGLISH PREFACE TO *HOMILIES II*

I, Ælfric, a monk, have translated this book from Latin books into the English tongue, for those men to read who do not know Latin. I have taken it from the holy gospels, and have treated it according to the expositions of the illustrious doctors whose names I wrote in the former book, in the Latin preface.[1] I have disposed in two books the narratives which I have translated, thinking it would be less tedious to hear if one book should be read in the course of one year, and the other the year following. In each of these books there are forty discourses, without the preface; but they are not all taken from the gospels, many of them being collected from the lives or the passions of God's saints — but only of those whom the English nation honors with feast-days. Before each discourse I have put the title in Latin, but any one who wishes may change the order of the chapters after the preface.[2]

## 5. NEW YEAR'S DAY

*Hom.* 1. 98–102

We have often heard that men call this day New Year's Day, as if this day were first in the course of the year; but in Christian books we find no explanation of why this day should be considered the beginning of the year. The old Romans, in heathen times, began the course of the year on this day; the Hebrew nations at the vernal equinox; the Greeks at the summer solstice; while the Egyptians

[1] Augustine, Jerome, Bede, Gregory the Great, Smaragdus, and occasionally Haymo.

[2] The close of the preface to each set of homilies is identical with that of the preface to Genesis, and that of the preface to the *Grammar*.

began the calculation of their year at harvest. Now our calendar begins, according to Roman ordinance, on this day, for no religious reason, but from old custom. Some of our service-books begin at the Lord's advent, yet not on that account is it the beginning of the year, nor with any reason is the beginning placed on this day, though our calendars repeat it at this place. Most rightly it seems that the beginning of the year should be observed on the day when the Almighty Creator made the sun and the moon and the stars, and the beginning of all the seasons, that is, on the day when the Hebrew people begin the calculation of their year, as Moses the leader wrote in the books of the law. Verily God said unto Moses concerning that month, 'This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you.'[1] Now the Hebrew people kept the first day of the year at the vernal equinox, because on that day the yearly seasons were set.

The eighteenth day of the month that we call March, which you call Hlȳda,[2] was the first day of this world. On that day God made light, and morning, and evening. Then followed three days without measure of time, for the heavenly bodies were not created before the fourth day. On the fourth day the Almighty established all the heavenly bodies, and the yearly seasons, and commanded them to be for a sign for days and years. Now the Hebrews begin their year on the day when all the seasons were appointed, that is, on the fourth day of the creation of the world, and the teacher Bede, with great discrimination, reckons that that day is the twenty-first of March, the day which we celebrate in honor of the holy man Benedict, because of

[1] Exod. 12. 2.

[2] The loud month (roaring, blustering), from OE. *hlūd*, 'loud.'

his great distinction. Indeed the earth too makes known by her shoots, which then renew their life, that the time when they were created is the most correct beginning of the year.

Now with great error, in accordance with heathen custom, and contrary to their Christianity, foolish men practise manifold divinations on this day, as if they could prolong their lives or their prosperity, while they provoke the Almighty Creator. Many are also possessed with such great error that they regulate their journeying by the moon, and their deeds according to days, not being willing to undertake anything on Monday, because of the beginning of the week, although Monday is not the first day in the week, but the second. . . .

Nevertheless, according to nature, every bodily creature in creation which the earth produces is fuller and more vigorous at full moon than in its wane. So also trees, if they are felled at full moon, are harder and more lasting for building, especially if they are rendered sapless. This is no charm, but a natural thing, by reason of their formation. Behold, the sea also accords with the course of the moon; they are always companions in their increase and decrease. And as the moon rises each day four points later, so also does the sea flow four points later.

### 6. DAILY MIRACLES

*Hom.* 1. 184–5

God hath wrought many miracles, and He performs them every day, but these miracles have become much less important in the sight of men because they are very common. The fact that each day God Almighty feeds the whole world, and guides the good, is a greater miracle than was

that of filling five thousand men with five loaves; yet men wondered at that, not because it was a greater miracle, but because it was unusual. Who now makes our fields productive, and multiplies the harvest from a few grains, but He who multiplied the five loaves? The power was in Christ's hands, and the five loaves were, so to speak, seed — not sown in the ground, but multiplied by Him who created the earth.

This miracle is very great, and deep in significance. Frequently one sees beautiful letters written, and praises the writer and the letters, but does not know what they mean. He who can distinguish between letters praises their beauty, but also reads the letters, and understands what they mean. We look at a painting in one way, and at letters in another. In the case of a painting, nothing more is necessary than for you to see and praise it; it is not sufficient for you to look at letters without also reading them, and understanding their meaning. So likewise is it in regard to that miracle which God wrought with the five loaves; it is not enough for us to wonder at the sign, or to praise God for it, unless we also comprehend its spiritual significance.

## 7. GOD AND THE HUMAN SOUL

*Hom.* 1. 284–8

Consider carefully the sun, in which there are, as we said before, heat and light; the heat dries, and the light illumines. The heat does one thing, and the light another, and although they cannot be separated, the heating pertains, nevertheless, to the heat, and the illumination to the light. In like manner, also, Christ alone assumed humanity, and not the Father nor the Holy Ghost; yet they were always with Him in all His works, and in all His course.

We speak of God — mortals, of the Immortal; feeble, of the Almighty; wretched, of the Merciful; but who can speak worthily of that which is ineffable? He is without measure, because He is everywhere. He is without number, because He is eternal. He is without weight, for He holds all creatures without effort; and He disposed them all in respect to these three things — namely, measure, number, and weight.[1] But know ye that no man can speak fully concerning God, since we cannot even examine or explain the creatures which He has created. Who can declare in words the array of heaven, or who the fruitfulness of the earth? Who shall adequately praise the circuit of all the seasons? Or who shall do so with regard to all other things, since we cannot, with our sight, fully apprehend the material things which we behold? Lo, thou seest a man before thee, but while thou art looking at his face, thou canst not see his back. In the same way, if thou art looking at a garment, thou canst not see it all at once, but turnest it about in order to see all of it. What wonder is it, then, if Almighty God, who is everywhere all in all and nowhere divided, is ineffable and incomprehensible?

Now some shallow-brained man will ask how God can be everywhere at once, and nowhere divided. Look at the sun, how high it rises, and how it sends its rays over the whole world, and how it illumines all this earth which mankind inhabit. As soon as it rises at early morn, it shines on Jerusalem, and on Rome, and on this country, and on all countries at once; nevertheless, it is a created thing, and moves by God's command. Imagine, then, how much more powerful is God's presence, and His might, and His visitation everywhere! Him nothing withstands,

[1] Wisd. of Sol. 11. 21: 'Omnia in mensure, et numere, et pondere disposuisti.'

neither stone wall nor broad barrier, as they withstand the sun. To Him is nothing hidden or unknown. Thou seest a man's face, but God seeth his heart. The Spirit of God tries the hearts of all men; and those who believe on Him and love Him, He cleanseth and maketh glad with His visitation, but the hearts of unbelievers He passes by and shuns.

Let every one know, also, that each man has within himself three things, indivisible and coöperative, even as God said when He first created man. He said, 'Let us make man in our image.' And then He made Adam after His own likeness. In which part has man the likeness of God within him? In the soul, not in the body. The soul of man has in its nature a likeness to the Holy Trinity, for it has within it three things — memory, understanding, and will. Through memory a man considers the things which he has heard, or seen, or learned. Through the understanding he comprehends all the things which he hears or sees. From the will come thoughts, and words, and works, both evil and good. There is one soul, and one life, and one substance, which has in it these three things working together inseparably, for where memory is, there are understanding and will, and they are always together. Yet the soul is no one of these three, but by the memory the soul remembers, by the understanding it comprehends, and by the will it wills whatever it pleases; but it is, nevertheless, one soul and one life. Wherefore it has the likeness of God within itself, since it has within it three things working inseparably. Yet the man is one man, and not a trinity; but God — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost — abides in a trinity of persons, and in the unity of one Godhead.

Man exists not in trinity, as God does, yet he bears in his soul the image of God.

## 8. SPIRITUAL MIRACLES

*Hom.* 1. 304–6

The Lord said, 'These signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.'[1]

These miracles were necessary at the beginning of Christianity, for through signs the heathen were turned to faith. The man who plants trees or herbs continues to water them until they are rooted; when they begin to grow, he stops the watering. In like manner, Almighty God continued to show miracles to the heathen until they believed; after faith had sprung up throughout the whole world, then miracles ceased. But, nevertheless, God's Church still performs daily, in a spiritual way, the same miracles which the apostles wrought in a physical way. When the priest christens a child, he casts the devil out of that child, for every heathen man is the devil's, but through holy baptism, if he observe it, he becomes God's. He who renounces disgraceful words and calumnies and harmful scoffings, and busies his mouth with the praises of God and with prayers, speaks with new tongues. He who controls foolishness or impatience, and restrains the bitterness of his heart, drives away serpents, for he destroys the wickedness of his mind. He who is allured to fornication, yet is not induced to carry it into effect, drinks poison, but it shall not hurt him if he flees to God in prayer. If any one be infirm of purpose, and indifferent to good conduct, then if another strengthen him and raise him up with

[1] Mark 16. 17, 18.

exhortation and examples of good works, it shall be as if he had laid his hands on the sick and healed him.

Spiritual miracles are greater than the physical ones were, for they heal a man's soul, which is eternal, whereas the earlier signs healed the mortal body. Both good men and evil wrought the earlier miracles. Judas, who betrayed Christ, was evil, though he had previously wrought miracles in the name of God. Of such men Christ said in another place:[1] 'I say unto you, many will say unto me in that great day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils from madmen, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity.' My brethren, love not those miracles which may be common to the good and to the evil, but love those signs which are exclusively those of good men — the signs of true love and piety. The evil man hath not true love, nor is the good man devoid of it. These signs are mysterious and without danger, and they receive so much the greater reward at the hands of God as their glory is less with men.

## 9. ALL SAINTS

*Hom.* 1. 538–546

God's saints are angels and men. Angels are spirits without bodies. The Almighty Ruler created them very fair, for His own praise, and to the glory and honor of His majesty for ever. We fear to speak much concerning them, since it is for God alone to know how their invisible nature endures in eternal purity, without any defilement or diminution. Nevertheless, we know from Holy Scripture that there

[1] Matt. 7. 22, 23.

are nine hosts[1] of angels dwelling in heavenly glory, who never committed any sin. The tenth host perished through pride, and were transformed into accursed spirits, driven from the joy of heaven into hell-torment.

But some of those holy spirits who continued with their Creator are sent to us, and they reveal future events. Some of them, at God's command, work signs, and frequently miracles, in the world. Some of them are leaders set over other angels for the fulfilment of divine mysteries. Through some God establishes and gives out His decrees. Some are so closely associated with God that there are no others between them, and they are consumed with so much the greater love as they the more keenly discern the brightness of God. Now this day is solemnly consecrated to these angels, and also to the holy men who in great honor, from the beginning of the world, grew ever nearer to God. Of these were first the patriarchs, men of religious and glorious lives, the fathers of the prophets, whose memory shall not be forgotten, and whose names shall endure for ever,[2] because they pleased God by faith, and righteousness, and obedience. The chosen company of prophets follow these; they talked with God, and He revealed to them His mysteries, and enlightened them with the grace of the Holy Ghost, so that they knew things to come, which they proclaimed in prophetic song. . . . Taught by the Holy Ghost, they prophesied the humanity of Christ, His passion, resurrection, and ascension, and the Great Judgment. In the New Testament, there was John the Baptist, who prophetically preached the advent of Christ. . . .

After the apostolic company, we honor the steadfast band of God's martyrs, who through divers torments manfully

[1] Cf. Gregory the Great, *Hom. in Evang.* 34. 7.
[2] Cf. Ecclus. 44. 9 ff.

imitated the passion of Christ, and through martyrdom attained the celestial kingdom. . . .

After the persecution carried on by the cruel kings and ealdormen had ceased, in the peaceful condition of God's Church there were holy priests growing in the grace of God, who, with true doctrine and holy examples, continually turned the men of the nation to God. Their minds were clean and filled with purity, and with clean hands they served God Almighty at His altar, celebrating the holy mystery of the body and blood of Christ. They also offered themselves a living sacrifice to God,[1] without corruption or admixture of any evil work. They delivered to their disciples that which they had been taught of God, as an imperishable revenue, turning their minds to the way of life with admonition, and prayer, and great diligence; nor through any fear of the world did they keep silence as to God's law. Although they did not feel the edge of the sword, yet because of the worthiness of their lives they were not deprived of martyrdom, for martyrdom is not brought about by bloodshed alone, but also by abstinence from sins, and by the observance of God's commands.

There followed the life and peculiar insight of the anchorites. They, dwelling in wildernesses, trampled with stern courage and austere life upon worldly delicacies and luxuries. They fled from the sight and the praise of laymen, and hiding in wretched caves or huts, associating with beasts, accustomed to angelic discourses, became glorious through their great miracles. To the blind they gave sight; to the lame, power to walk; to the deaf, hearing; to the dumb, speech. They overcame devils and put them to flight; and through the power of God they raised the dead. The book called *Vitæ Patrum* speaks in many ways of the lives

[1] Cf. Rom. 12. 1.

of these anchorites, and also about those of common monks, saying that there were thousands of them living everywhere, in a wonderful manner, in deserts and in monasteries, especially in Egypt. Some of them lived on fruit and herbs, some by their own toil; to some angels ministered, and to others birds,[1] until angels later bore them by an easy death to God. . . .

To all these aforesaid saints, that is, angels and God's chosen men, the honor of this day is consecrated in the faithful Church, for their glory and for our help, in order that through their intercession we may have fellowship with them.

## 10. THE EASTER HOMILY

*Hom.* 2. 262 ff.

The date (1567) of the publication, in Elizabeth's reign, of the *Easter Homily*, may conveniently be reckoned as that which marks the beginning of the study of English, as we now understand that term. The English Protestants were casting about for some way of proving that they were not such absolute innovators as the Romanists had assumed. At this juncture, Archbishop Matthew Parker, and his chaplain, John Joscelyn, published *A Testimonie of Antiquitie, shewing the auncient Fayth in the Church of England touching the Sacrament of the Body and Bloude of the Lord*, the 'testimony' being this homily.

The passion to explore our earlier literature and language thus had a theological root. The book was reprinted in 1623, 1638, and 1687, not to speak of more modern editions; and part of it was included in Foxe's *Acts and Monuments*. Controversy has raged about the *Easter Homily* down to comparatively recent times. Thus Soames (*Anglo-Saxon Church*, London, 1856, p. 202) speaks of it, and Ælfric's two epistles, as 'irresistible evidence that neither he, nor the Church of England in his day, held the eucharistic belief of modern Rome.' On the other hand, Lingard (*Anglo-Saxon Church*, London, 1858, 2. 408 ff.), in a long note on Ælfric, affirms

[1] Cf. 1 Kings 17. 6.

that Ælfric's language on the subject was not that of the Old English Church in general, but peculiar to himself, since in this homily he was dependent upon Ratramnus, who lived about 860; but that his meaning was not heterodox, and that (p. 426) 'he makes use of distinctions very like those adopted by the Council of Trent, and in use among Catholic divines at the present day.' It may be added that Ratramnus (whom Lingard calls Bertram) has never been condemned as heretical by the Roman Church, though his writings were placed upon the Index by Pope Paul IV in 1559 (Wetzer and Welte, *Kirchenlexikon*, 2d ed., 10. 805–6). The following extract from his treatise *On the Body and Blood of Christ* (Migne, *Patr. Lat.* 121. 147) will indicate something of the relation between his doctrine and that of Ælfric: 'The body and blood of Christ, partaken of in the Church by the mouth of the faithful, are symbols (*figuræ*) according to the visible appearance; but according to the invisible substance, that is, by the power of the divine Word, are truly the body and blood of Christ.'

Dearly beloved, you have frequently been told about the resurrection of our Saviour — how, on this day, after His passion, He mightily arose from death. We will now, through the grace of God, enlighten you concerning the holy eucharist to which you are about to go, and guide your understanding with regard to that mystery, according to the teaching of both the Old Testament and the New, lest any doubt as to that banquet of life do you harm.

God Almighty directed Moses, the leader in Egypt, to command [1] the people of Israel that, on the night in which they were to depart thence to the promised land, they should take a yearling lamb for every hearth, offer that lamb to God, and then kill it, making with its blood the sign of the cross over their door-posts and lintels, and afterwards eat of the lamb's flesh roasted, together with unleavened bread and wild lettuce. . . .

[1] Exod. 12. 3 ff.

To-day Christian men may not keep the old law literally, but at least they are bound to know its spiritual significance. The innocent lamb which the ancient Israel used to slay was a symbol, spiritually interpreted, of the passion of Christ, who, though innocent, shed His holy blood for our sins. Wherefore at every mass God's servants sing, *Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis,* which, being interpreted, is, 'O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world, have mercy upon us.' The people of Israel were delivered from sudden death, and from bondage to Pharaoh, through the offering of the lamb, which signified Christ's passion, by which we are redeemed from eternal death and from the power of the raging devil, if we rightly believe on the true Redeemer of the whole world, Jesus Christ. The lamb was offered at evening, and our Saviour suffered in the sixth age of the world, which is considered the evening of this transitory world. Over their door-posts and lintels was marked with the blood of the lamb *Tau,* that is, the sign of the cross, and thus were they protected from the angel that slew the first-born children of the Egyptians. And we must mark our foreheads and our hearts with the sign of Christ's cross, in order that, being thus marked with the blood of our Lord's passion, we may be saved from destruction.

The people of Israel ate the flesh of the lamb at their Eastertide, when they were delivered, and we now partake spiritually of Christ's body and drink His blood, when with true faith we receive the holy eucharist. The time when they had been saved from Pharaoh, and had departed from the country, they were accustomed to keep for seven days with great honor, as their Eastertide. And in like manner, we Christian men keep Christ's resurrection for seven days as our Eastertide, because through His passion

and resurrection we are redeemed, and we shall be purified by partaking of the holy sacrament, even as Christ Himself said in His gospel:[1] 'Verily, verily I say unto you, except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, ye have no life in you. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me and I in him, and he hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat heavenly food in the wilderness, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live for ever.' He blessed bread before His passion, and gave it to His disciples, saying, 'Eat this bread, it is my body; this do in remembrance of me.' Afterwards He blessed wine in a cup, saying, 'Drink ye all of it, this is my blood which is shed for many for the remission of sins.' The apostles did as Christ had commanded them, in that they were afterwards wont to bless bread and wine in remembrance of Him.[2] So also, according to Christ's behest, their successors and all priests consecrate bread and wine for communion in His name, and with the apostolic blessing.

Some men have often wondered, and frequently wonder still, how bread prepared from grain, and baked by the heat of the fire, can be changed to Christ's body; or how wine, pressed from many grapes, can by any blessing be changed to the Lord's blood. Now we say to such men that some things are related of Christ figuratively, and some literally. It is certain that Christ was born of a virgin, and by His own will suffered death and was buried, and on this day arose from death. He is called in a figurative sense Bread, and Lamb, and Lion, and so on. He is called Bread, since He is our life, and that of the angels; He is called Lamb on account of His innocence, and Lion because of the strength

[1] Cf. John 6. 53 ff.; Matt. 26. 26–28. [2] Cf. 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25.

with which He overcame the powerful devil. Yet according to His true nature Christ is neither bread, nor a lamb, nor a lion. Why then is the holy eucharist called Christ's body, if it is not truly that which it is called ?[1] The bread and the wine which are consecrated through the mass of priests appear one thing to our human understanding, as viewed from without, and quite another to believing souls, as viewed from within. From without, both in appearance and taste, they seem bread and wine, but after the consecration they are truly, through a spiritual mystery, the body and blood of Christ. When a heathen child is baptized, its outward appearance is not altered, though its inner nature is changed. Through Adam's transgression it is sinful when brought to the font, but it is cleansed of all inward sins, although its outward appearance is not transformed. In like manner the holy baptismal water, which is called the well of life, in appearance resembles other water, and is subject to corruption ; but when, through the priestly benediction, the power of the Holy Ghost is brought nigh this corruptible water, by its spiritual efficacy it cleanses body and soul from all sins. In this one element we find two characteristics : in its true nature the water is a corruptible fluid, but according to a spiritual mystery it has healing power. So also if we consider the holy eucharist in a physical sense, we see that it is a corruptible and changeable substance, but if we discern its spiritual efficacy, then we perceive that there is life in it, and that upon those who

[1] It may be interesting to read a sentence or two from the Elizabethan translation mentioned above (taken from the reprint of 1638) : 'Why is then that holy housell called Christs Body, or his Bloud, if it be not truly that it is called ? Truly the Bread and the Wine which by the Masse of the Priest is hallowed, shew one thing without to humane vnderstanding, and another thing they call within to beleeuing minds. Without they be seene Bread and Wine both in figure and in taste, and they be truly after their hallowing, Christs Body and his Bloud, through ghostly mystery.'

receive it in true faith it confers immortality. Great is the difference between the corruptible virtue of the holy sacrament and its visible aspect. By nature it is corruptible bread and wine, but through the power of the divine word it is indeed the body and the blood of Christ, not however in a literal sense, but spiritually. Very different is the body in which Christ suffered from the body which is consecrated to the eucharist. The body in which Christ suffered was born of Mary's flesh, with blood and bones, skin and sinews and human limbs, quickened by a rational soul; whereas His spiritual body, which we call the eucharist, is gathered from many grains, is without blood and bone and limbs, and hath no soul; wherefore it is to be interpreted in no wise literally, but wholly in a spiritual sense. Whatever the sacrament contains of life-giving power comes from its spiritual virtue and invisible efficacy. Hence the holy eucharist is called a mystery, because whereas one thing is seen, another is to be understood, that which is seen having a material aspect, and that which it symbolizes possessing spiritual efficacy. Verily Christ's body, which suffered death and rose from death, shall henceforth never die, but is eternal and impassible. The sacrament is temporal, not eternal, corruptible, distributed in fragments, chewed between the teeth and sent into the stomach, but nevertheless, by reason of spiritual power, its parts are all one. Many partake of the holy body, and yet, through a spiritual mystery, the whole of it is in each several part. Although a smaller part fall to one man, yet there is no more efficacy in the greater part than in the less, because, through its invisible virtue, it is complete in each man.

This mystery is a pledge and a symbol; Christ's body is truth. This pledge we hold mystically until we come to the truth, and then will it be fulfilled. Verily it is, as we

said before, the body and the blood of Christ, not literally, but spiritually. Nor must ye wonder how this is brought about, but have faith that it is thus effected. . . .

Paul the apostle, in an epistle to believers, wrote thus[1] of the ancient people Israel: 'All our forefathers were baptized in the cloud and in the sea, and they did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink. They drank from that Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.' The rock from which the water flowed was not Christ literally, but it symbolized Christ, who declared unto all believers:[2] 'If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, and out of his belly shall flow living water.' This He said of the Holy Ghost, whom those received who believed on Him. The apostle Paul said that the people of Israel ate the same spiritual meat, and drank the same spiritual drink, because the heavenly food which fed them for forty years, and the water which flowed from the rock, symbolized Christ's body and His blood, which are now offered daily in God's Church. They were the same which we now offer, not literally, but spiritually.

We told you a little while ago that before His passion Christ blessed bread and wine for communion, saying, 'This is my body and my blood.' He had not yet suffered, but nevertheless through invisible power He turned the bread into His own body, and the wine into His blood, even as He had formerly done in the wilderness before He was born as man, when He changed the heavenly meat into His flesh, and the water that flowed from the rock into His blood. Many did eat of the heavenly meat in the wilderness, and drink the spiritual drink, and then died, even as Christ said. Christ did not mean that death which

[1] Cf. 1 Cor. 10. 1–4.

[2] Cf. John 7. 37–9.

no man can escape, but He meant the eternal death which, because of unbelief, some of the people had merited. Moses and Aaron, and many others of the people who pleased God, ate the heavenly bread, and did not suffer eternal death, although they died the common death. They perceived that the heavenly meat was visible and corruptible, but they understood the visible thing in a spiritual sense, and partook of it spiritually. Jesus said, 'Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life.' He did not command men to eat the body with which He was invested, nor to drink the blood which He shed for us, but by these words He meant the holy eucharist, which is spiritually His body and His blood, and he who tastes of that with believing heart hath eternal life.

Under the old law believers offered to God divers gifts that prefigured Christ's body, which He Himself afterwards offered to His heavenly Father as a sacrifice for our sins. Verily this sacrament which is now consecrated at God's altar is a memorial of Christ's body, which He offered for us, and of His blood, which He shed for us, even as He Himself commanded, 'This do in remembrance of me.'

Christ suffered once through Himself,[1] but nevertheless His passion is daily renewed through the mystery of the holy eucharist at holy mass. Wherefore, as has often been manifested, the holy mass greatly benefits both the living and the dead. We must also consider that, according to a spiritual mystery, the holy sacrament is both the body of Christ and that of all believers, as the wise Augustine said of it: 'If you will understand concerning the body of Christ, hear the apostle Paul, who says, "You are truly the body and the members of Christ." Now your mystery is laid on God's table, and you receive your mystery, to which you

[1] Cf. 1 Pet. 3. 18.

yourselves have been transformed. Be what you see on the altar, and receive what you yourselves are.'[1] Again the apostle Paul said on this point, 'We, being many, are one bread and one body in Christ.'[2] Understand now and rejoice: it is many who constitute one bread and one body in Christ. He is our Head, and we are His members. The bread is not made of one grain, but of many, nor the wine of one grape, but of many.[3] In like manner we must have unity in our Lord, as it is written concerning the multitude of them that believed that they were in as great unity as if they had had one heart and one soul.[4]

Christ blessed on His table the mystery[5] of our peace and our unity. He who receives the mystery of unity, and holds not the bond of true peace,[6] receives not the mystery for himself, but as a witness against himself.[7] Much do Christian men gain by going frequently to communion, if in their hearts they bear innocence to the altar, and if they are not beset with sins. To the wicked man it brings no good, but rather destruction, if he taste of the sacrament

[1] Augustine, *Sermo* 229 (Migne, *Patr. Lat.* 5[1]. 1103): 'Quia passus est pro nobis, commendavit nobis in isto sacramento corpus et sanguinem suum; quod etiam fecit et nos ipsos. Nam et nos corpus ipsius facti sumus, et per misericordiam ipsius quod accepimus, nos sumus. Recordamini, et vos non fuistis, et creati estis. . . . Hæretici quando hoc accipiunt, testimonium contra se accipiunt: quia illi quærunt divisionem, cum panis iste indicet unitatem. Sic et vinum in multis racemis fuit, et modo in unum est. . . . In nomine Christi tanquam ad calicem Domini venistis; et ibi vos estis in mensa, et ibi vos estis in calice.'

[2] 1 Cor. 10. 17.

[3] Augustine, *Sermo* 227 (as above, 1099–1100): 'Si bene accepistis, vos estis quod accepistis. Apostolus enim dicit: Unus panis, unum corpus, multi sumus. Sic exposuit sacramentum mensæ Dominicæ: Commendatur vobis in isto pane quomodo unitatem amare debeatis. Numquid enim panis ille de uno grano factus est? Nonne multa erant tritici grana? Sed antequam ad panem venirent, separata erant; per aquam conjuncta sunt, et post quamdam contritionem. . . . Et efficimini panis, quod est corpus Christi.'

[4] Acts 4. 32.

[5] Perhaps in the sense of 'sacrament.'

[6] Eph. 4. 3.

[7] See note 1, above.

unworthily.[1] Holy books command that water be mixed with the wine used for communion, because water is typical of the people, even as wine is of the blood of Christ, and therefore neither should be offered without the other at holy mass, that Christ may be with us, and we with Christ, the Head with the members, and the members with the Head.

## 11 THE TRUE SHEPHERD AND THE HIRELING

*Hom.* 1. 238–42

Every bishop and every teacher is placed as a shepherd over God's people, to protect that people against the wolf. The wolf is the devil, who lies in wait about God's Church, and plots how to destroy the souls of Christian men with sins. Then must the shepherd, that is, the bishop or other teacher, resist the fierce wolf with doctrine and with prayers. With doctrine he shall instruct them, so that they may know what the devil teaches for men's perdition, and what God commands them to observe for the attainment of everlasting life. He must intercede for them, praying that God will protect the strong and heal the weak. He is considered strong who withstands the instigation of the devil; he is weak who falls into sin. But the teacher shall be guiltless if he guides the people with doctrine, and intercedes for them with God. These two things shall he do for the people, and also help others with his own possessions, and, if it so happen, give his own life for the salvation of the people.

'The hireling fleeth when he seeth the wolf.'[2] He is a hireling, and not a shepherd, who is entangled in the things of the world, who loves honor and perishable rewards, and has no inward love for God's sheep. He seeks after

[1] Cf. 1 Cor. 11. 29.

[2] Cf. John 10. 12.

treasures, and rejoices in honor, and has his reward during this life, but shall be deprived of everlasting reward. Thou knowest not who is a hireling, nor who a shepherd, until the wolf comes; but the wolf shows how he cared for the sheep. . . . He flees not in body, but in mind. He flees because he has seen iniquity, and kept silence. He flees because he is a hireling, and not a shepherd, as if it were said, 'He cannot withstand the dangers that beset the sheep if he does not watch over the sheep with love, but looks out for himself, that is, loves worldly gain and not God's people.'

The unrighteous ruler, who robs Christians, and oppresses the humble with his power, is also a wolf; but the hireling, or mercenary, does not dare resist his iniquity, lest he lose favor, and the worldly gain which he loves more than he does Christian men. Concerning this the prophet Ezekiel wrote, saying: 'Ye shepherds, hear the word of the Lord. My sheep are scattered through your carelessness, and are devoured. Ye care for your own sustenance, and not for that of the sheep. Wherefore I will require the sheep at your hands, and will cause you to withdraw from the fold, and I will rescue my flock from you. I myself will collect my sheep that were scattered, and will keep them in an abundant pasture. That which was lost I will seek and bring again; that which was maimed, I will heal; the sick I will strengthen, and will protect the strong; and I will feed them in judgment and in righteousness.'[1] . . .

Jesus said: 'And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold.' . . . This he spake in the land of Judea; in that province there was a fold of those who believed in God. The other sheep are those of all other countries who worship God; and Christ will bring them all into one fold.

[1] Ezek. 34. 7 ff., freely rendered and abridged.

## 12. THE INVENTION OF THE HOLY CROSS

*Hom.* 2. 302–6

A longer homily on this same subject may be found in Morris, *Legends of the Holy Rood* (London, 1871), pp. 3–17, and both may be compared with the Old English *Elene*. See Stevens, *The Cross in the Life and Literature of the Anglo-Saxons* (New York, 1904), and *The Dream of the Rood*, ed. Cook (Oxford, 1905).

Dearly beloved, we commemorate to-day the holy cross on which our Lord suffered, for on this day it was manifested unto men. Jerome, the wise priest, wrote in the book which we call *Ecclesiastica Historia*[1] that there was a Roman emperor named Constantine, who was upright in morals and virtuous in deeds, a supporter of Christians, but not yet baptized. A bloodthirsty general, named Maxentius, warred against him with a great host, wishing to deprive him of his life and kingdom. In great anxiety the Emperor set forth with an army, looking often toward heaven, and earnestly imploring divine aid. Then in a dream he saw in the resplendent east, gloriously shining, the sign of the Lord's cross, and angels, whom he saw, said unto him: 'Emperor Constantine, with this sign do thou overcome thine enemies.' Then he awoke, rejoicing because of the vision and the promised victory, and he marked on his head and on his standard the holy sign of the cross, to the honor of God. He also commanded a little cross of pure gold to be forged, which he carried in his right hand, earnestly beseeching the Almighty Lord that his right hand might never be stained with the red blood of the Roman people, to whom he would grant every favor if Maxentius alone, who held the city with hostile intent, would submit

[1] Rather Rufinus' (ca. 345–410) free and interpolated translation of Eusebius' (ca. 260–ca. 340) *Ecclesiastical History*. This passage is from Book 9, chapter 9.

to him. Then with great treachery Maxentius ordered that the river should be completely bridged over with ships, which were then to be planked like any other bridge, so that the emperor could go on it; but that which he intended for the other happened to himself. The miscreant departed by himself from the city, and commanded the army to ride after him, in his great joy forgetting, at the moment, the false bridge which he had ordered laid, and riding to it alone at tremendous speed. The ships separated and went to the bottom, horse and all, but the army stopped, saved from danger by his sole death. Thus was fulfilled the prayer of the emperor that his hand, which held the cross, might not be stained with the outpoured blood of his own citizens. Then all the people greatly rejoiced that they could return in safety to the city; they then received the emperor according to custom, and he victoriously took possession of his throne, being baptized in Christ, who had protected his people.

His mother was a Christian,[1] Helena by name, a true believer and extremely devout. With perfect faith she went to Jerusalem, seeking to find the cross upon which Christ had suffered. She went to the place which God had indicated by means of a heavenly sign, and found three crosses, one being that of Jesus, and the others those of the thieves. However, she did not know which was the cross of Christ, until He revealed it by signs Then the queen rejoiced greatly that she was permitted to find this treasure in the earth, and through signs to recognize it. On the place of execution, where the cross lay, she erected a church to the dear Lord; and she enclosed a part of the cross in white silver, taking the rest

[1] From Rufinus' own *Ecclesiastical History*, a continuation of Eusebius, 1. 7. 8.

of it, together with the iron nails which had been driven through Christ's hands when He was made fast, to her son.

Thus did Jerome, the wise expositor, write concerning the way in which the holy cross was found. If any one relates otherwise, we refer to him.

Christian men should certainly bow to the sacred cross in the name of Jesus, for although we have not the one upon which He suffered, yet its image is, nevertheless, holy, and to that we ever bow in prayer to the mighty Lord who suffered for men. And the cross is a memorial of His great passion, holy through Him, although it grew in a forest. We ever honor it to the glory of Christ, who through it redeemed us with love, for which we give thanks unto Him evermore, so long as we live.

## 13. A COLLOQUY

Wright-Wülker, *Vocabularies* 1. 88–103

This was a device for teaching English boys Latin. The Latin was first written, and then the English meanings over the Latin words, forming an interlinear gloss. This was a late application of a method practised under the Roman Empire, where it was necessary for officials and important subjects to know something of at least two languages, Greek and Latin — in the case of Orientals besides their own. Sometimes the conversation and its translation would be written in parallel columns, as in the interesting example given in Wilamowitz-Möllendorf, *Griechisches Lesebuch*, pp. 400–402, from which an extract in Latin is subjoined:

'Proficiscor ad scholam; intravi; dixi "Ave, magister"; et ipse me deosculatus est et resalutavit. Tradit mihi puer meus tabellas, thecam, stilum; produco graphium meo loco sedens; deleo; describo ad exemplar, ut scripsi autem, ostendo magistro; emendavit, induxit; jubet me legere; jussus alii dedi; ediscebam interpretamenta; reddidi. "Sed statim dicta mihi." Dictavit mihi condiscipulus. "Et tu" inquit. Dixi ei "Redde primum." Et dixit mihi "Non vidisti cum redderem prius te?"'

### Pupils

*Pupil.* We children beg you, teacher, to show us how to speak Latin correctly, for we are ignorant, and speak inaccurately.

*Teacher.* What do you wish to talk about?

*Pupil.* What do we care what we talk about, if only it be correctly spoken and useful, not trivial or base?

*Teacher.* Do you wish to be flogged in your studying?

*Pupil.* We would rather be flogged for the sake of learning than be ignorant, but we know that you are gentle, and will not inflict blows upon us unless we force you to do so.

*Teacher.* I ask you what you will say to me? — What is your work?

*Pupil.* I am by profession a monk, and every day I sing seven hour-services with the brethren, and am occupied with reading and singing; nevertheless, during the intervals I should like to learn to speak Latin.

*Teacher.* What do these your companions know?

*Pupil.* Some of them are plowmen, some shepherds, some oxherds; others, again, are hunters, some are fishermen, some fowlers; then there are merchants, shoemakers, salt-workers, and bakers.

### Plowman

*Teacher.* What have you to say, plowman? How do you carry on your work?

*Plowman.* O master, I work very hard; I go out at dawn, drive the oxen to the field, and yoke them to the plow. There is no storm so severe that I dare to hide at home, for fear of my lord, but when the oxen are yoked,

and the share and coulter have been fastened to the plow, I must plow a whole acre or more every day.

*Teacher.* Have you any companion?

*Plowman.* I have a boy to urge on the oxen with a goad; he is now hoarse on account of the cold and his shouting.

*Teacher.* What else do you do during the day?

*Plowman.* I do a good deal more. I must fill the bins of the oxen with hay, water them, and carry off their dung.

*Teacher.* Oh! oh! the labor must be great!

*Plowman.* It is indeed great drudgery, because I am not free.

### Shepherd

*Teacher.* What have you to say, shepherd? Have you any work?

*Shepherd.* Indeed I have. In the early morning I drive my sheep to their pasture, and in heat and cold I stand over them with dogs, lest wolves devour them. And I lead them back to their folds, and milk them twice a day; besides this, I move their folds, and make cheese and butter, and I am faithful to my lord. . . .

### Hunter

*Hunter.* I am a hunter.

*Teacher.* Whose?

*Hunter.* The king's.

*Teacher.* How do you carry on your work?

*Hunter.* I weave my nets, and put them in a suitable place, and train my hounds to pursue the wild beasts until they come unexpectedly to the nets, and are thus entrapped, and then I slay them in the nets.

*Teacher.* Can you not hunt except with nets?

*Hunter.* Yes, I can hunt without nets.

*Teacher.* How?

*Hunter.* I pursue wild beasts with swift hounds.

*Teacher.* What wild beasts do you chiefly take?

*Hunter.* I take harts, and boars, and does, and goats, and sometimes hares.

*Teacher.* Did you hunt to-day?

*Hunter.* I did not, because it is Sunday, but yesterday I went hunting.

*Teacher.* What did you take?

*Hunter.* Two harts and a boar.

*Teacher.* How did you capture them?

*Hunter.* The harts I took in nets, and the boar I slew.

*Teacher.* How did you dare to kill a boar?

*Hunter.* The hounds drove him to me, and, standing opposite him, I slew him suddenly.

*Teacher.* You were very bold.

*Hunter.* A hunter should not be afraid, because many sorts of wild beasts live in the woods.

*Teacher.* What do you do with your game?

*Hunter.* I give the king what I take, for I am his hunter.

*Teacher.* What does he give you?

*Hunter.* He clothes and feeds me well, and sometimes he gives me a horse or a ring, that I may the more willingly pursue my trade. . . .

### Fisherman

*Teacher.* What fish do you catch?

*Fisherman.* Eels and pike, minnows and burbots, trout and lampreys, and whatever swims in the rushing stream.

*Teacher.* Why do you not fish in the sea?

*Fisherman.* Sometimes I do, but rarely, because a large ship is necessary on the sea.

*Teacher.* What do you catch in the sea?

*Fisherman.* Herring and salmon, dolphins and sturgeons, oysters and crabs, mussels, winkles, cockles, flounders, soles, lobsters, and many such things.

*Teacher.* Would you like to catch a whale?

*Fisherman.* Not I.

*Teacher.* Why not?

*Fisherman.* Because it is a dangerous thing to catch a whale. It is safer for me to go to the river with my ship than to go with many ships to hunt whales.

*Teacher.* Why?

*Fisherman.* Because I prefer to take a fish that I can kill rather than one which with a single stroke can swallow up and destroy not only me but also my companions.

*Teacher.* Nevertheless, many take whales without danger, and receive a large price for them. . . .

### Fowler

*Fowler.* In many ways I entice birds — with nets, with nooses, with lime, with whistling, with a hawk, or with traps.

*Teacher.* Have you a hawk?

*Fowler.* I have.

*Teacher.* Can you tame them?

*Fowler.* Yes, I can. What good would they do me if I did not know how to tame them?

*Hunter.* Give me a hawk.

*Fowler.* So I will gladly, if you will give me a swift hound. Which hawk will you have, the bigger one or the smaller?

*Hunter.* Give me the bigger one.

*Teacher.* How do you feed your hawks?

*Fowler.* They feed themselves and me in the winter, and in the spring I let them fly to the woods; then in the autumn I take young ones for myself, and tame them.

*Teacher.* And why do you let the tamed ones fly away from you?

*Fowler.* Because I do not wish to feed them in summer, for they eat a great deal.

*Teacher.* Yet many feed the tamed ones through the summer, in order to have them ready again.

*Fowler.* Yes, so they do, but I will not go to so much trouble for them, because I can get others — not one, but many more.

### Merchant

*Teacher.* What have you to say, merchant?

*Merchant.* I say that I am useful to king and to ealdormen, to the wealthy, and to the whole people.

*Teacher.* And how so?

*Merchant.* I go aboard my ship with my wares, and row over parts of the sea, selling my goods, and buying precious things which cannot be produced in this country. Then, with great peril on the sea, I bring them here to you. Sometimes I suffer shipwreck, and lose all my things, scarce escaping with my life.

*Teacher.* What things do you bring us?

*Merchant.* Purple garments and silks; precious gems and gold; strange[1] raiment and spice; wine and oil; ivory and brass; copper and tin; sulphur and glass, and many such things. . . .

[1] The Latin has 'varias,' however.

### Shoemaker

*Shoemaker.* I buy hides and skins, and prepare them by means of my art, making of them foot-wear of various kinds — slippers, shoes, and gaiters; bottles, reins, and trappings; flasks and leathern vessels, spur-straps and halters, bags and purses; and not one of you could pass a winter except for my trade. . . .

### Counselor

*Teacher.* Monk, you who are speaking with me, I have convinced myself that you have companions who are good and very necessary — but who are these?

*Pupil.* Smiths — a blacksmith, a goldsmith, a silversmith, a coppersmith — and a carpenter, besides workers at many other kinds of trades.

*Teacher.* Have you any wise counselor?

*Pupil.* Certainly I have. How can our assembly be ruled without a counselor?

*Teacher.* What do you say, wise man, which of these trades seems to you the greatest?

*Counselor.* I tell you, the service of God seems to me to hold the chief place among these occupations, even as it is written in the gospel, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.'[1]

*Teacher.* And which of the secular occupations appears to you to hold the supremacy?

*Counselor.* Agriculture, because the farmer feeds us all. . . .

*The counselor says:* O comrades and good workmen, let us speedily quell these disputes, and let there be peace

[1] Matt. 6. 33.

and concord among us, and let each one benefit the rest in his own trade, and always agree with the farmer, at whose hands we obtain food for ourselves and fodder for our horses. And this advice I give to all workmen, that each of them zealously pursue his own trade, since he who forsakes his occupation is himself forsaken by his occupation. Whosoever thou art, whether priest, or monk, or layman, or soldier, practise thyself in this, and be what thou art, because it is a great disgrace and shame for a man not to be willing to be that which he is, and that which he ought to be. . . .

### Pupils

*Teacher.* I ask you why you are so eager to learn?

*Pupil.* Because we do not wish to be like stupid animals that know nothing but grass and water.

*Teacher.* And what do you wish?

*Pupil.* We wish to be wise.

*Teacher.* In what wisdom? Do you wish to be crafty or Protean, subtle in deceit, shrewd of speech, guileful, speaking good and thinking evil, given to soft words, nourishing fraud within yourselves, like a whited sepulchre, beautiful without, but within full of all uncleanness?[1]

*Pupil.* We do not wish to be wise like that, for he is not wise who deceives himself with pretenses.

*Teacher.* But how would you be wise?

*Pupil.* We wish to be simple, without hypocrisy, so that we may turn from evil and do good; however, you are speaking to us more profoundly than our years can comprehend. Speak to us in our own way, not so deeply.

*Teacher.* I will do just as you say. Boy, what have you done to-day?

[1] Cf. Matt. 23. 27.

*Pupil.* I have done many things. In the night, when I heard the bell, I arose from my bed and went to church, and sang nocturns with the brethren, after which we sang of all saints and lauds, and after this, prime and seven Psalms, with the litany and the first mass. Then we sang terce, and did the mass for the day, after which we sang sext, and ate, and drank, and slept. Then again we arose and sang nones, and now we are here before you, ready to hear what you will say to us.

*Teacher.* When will you sing evensong and compline?

*Pupil.* When it is time.

*Teacher.* Were you flogged to-day?

*Pupil.* I was not, for I carefully restrained myself.

*Teacher.* And how about your companions?

*Pupil.* Why do you ask me that? I dare not reveal our secrets to you. Every one knows whether he was flogged or not.

*Teacher.* What do you eat during the day?

*Pupil.* As yet I feed on meat, for I am a child living under the rod.

*Teacher.* What else do you eat?

*Pupil.* Herbs, eggs, fish, cheese, butter, and beans, and all clean things, I eat with great thankfulness.

*Teacher.* You are extremely voracious, since you eat everything that is set before you.

*Pupil.* I am not so voracious that I can eat all kinds of food at one meal.

*Teacher.* How then?

*Pupil.* Sometimes I eat one food, and sometimes another, with moderation, as befits a monk, and not with voracity, for I am no glutton.

*Teacher.* And what do you drink?

*Pupil.* Ale if I have it, or water if I have no ale.

*Teacher.* Do you not drink wine?

*Pupil.* I am not so rich that I can buy wine, and wine is not a drink for children or the foolish, but for the old and the wise.

*Teacher.* Where do you sleep?

*Pupil.* In the dormitory with the brethren.

*Teacher.* Who awakens you for nocturns?

*Pupil.* Sometimes I hear the bell, and arise; sometimes my master sternly arouses me with the rod.

## 14. FRAGMENT OF A HOMILY ON THE FALSE GODS

*Annaler for Nordisk Oldkyndighed* (Copenhagen, 1846), pp. 68–81

The latter part of this homily, the account of the false gods, is printed by Kemble, *Salomon and Saturnus*, pp. 120–5. A somewhat different recension may be found in Wulfstan, ed. Napier, pp. 104–7.

Beloved brethren, divine Scripture teaches us the worship of one true God, in these words, 'There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.[1] Of Him are all things, and through Him are all things, and in Him are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen.'[2]

The Almighty Father begat a Son of Himself, without intercourse of woman, and by the Son He made all creatures, both seen and unseen. The Son is just as old as the Father, for the Father was always without beginning, and the Son was always begotten of Him without beginning, as mighty as the Father. The Holy Ghost is not begotten, but is the Will and the Love of the Father and the Son, of them both alike; and by the Holy Ghost are quickened all creatures that the Father created by His Son, who is

[1] Eph. 4. 5. [2] Cf. Rom. 11. 36.

His Wisdom. The Holy Trinity is one Almighty God, ever without beginning and end. They are three in name — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost — but they are not three Gods; these three are one Almighty God, inseparable, for in these three there is one nature, one intelligence, and one energy in all things, and it is better for us to believe truly in the Holy Trinity, and to confess it, than to wonder too much about it.

This Trinity created the bright angels, and then Adam and Eve as human beings, giving them dominion over earthly creatures. And they might have lived forever, without death, if they had never broken that one commandment of God. Adam then dwelt in happiness, free from care, and no creature could harm him so long as he kept the heavenly behest. No fire hurt him, though he stepped into it, nor could water drown the man, even if he suddenly ran into the waves. Neither could any wild beast injure him, nor did any reptile dare do him harm by biting him. No more could hunger, nor thirst, grievous cold, nor extreme heat, nor sickness afflict Adam in the world, so long as he kept that little commandment with faith. But when he had sinned and broken God's behest, he lost happiness, and lived in toil, so that lice and fleas boldly bit him whom formerly not even the serpent had dared to touch. Then he had to beware of water and of fire, and to be on the watch lest harm befall him, and to provide food for himself by his own toil. Moreover, the natural gifts with which God had endowed him he had to guard with great care in order to keep them. Even so the good do still, they who with toil keep themselves from sins.

The sun also, and likewise the moon, were deprived of their fair light after Adam's guilt, though not of their own deserts. The sun had been seven times brighter before

man sinned, while the moon had the light which the sun now gives us.[1] Nevertheless, after the Day of Judgment they shall again have their full light with which they were created. And the moon shall not grow old, but shall shine undiminished, even as the sun does now.

With much effort men may bring it to pass that they dwell with God in eternal happiness after the Day of Judgment, for ever without death, if in their deeds they now obey His commandments. But those who deny God shall be plunged into hell, into everlasting punishments and endless torments.

Now we do not read in Scripture that men set up idolatry during any of the time before Noah's flood, and not until the giants made the wonderful tower after Noah's flood, and God gave them as many tongues as there were workmen.[2] Then they separated and went into distant lands, and mankind increased. Then they were taught by the old devil who had formerly deceived Adam, and they wickedly fashioned gods for themselves, forsaking the Creator who had made them men. And they considered it the part of wisdom to worship as gods the sun and the moon, because of their resplendent light, and offered them gifts, neglecting their Creator. Some men also said of the bright stars that they were gods, and willingly worshiped them. Some believed in fire, for its quick burning, some also in water, and worshiped these as gods; while others believed in the earth, since it nourishes all things. But they might have discerned, if they had had the sense, that there is one God who created all things for men's use, through His great goodness. Creatures do just as their Creator taught them, and can do nothing but the will of the Lord, for there is no Creator save the one true God.

[1] See Isa. 30. 26.

[2] Gen. 6. 1 ff.; 11. 1 ff.

And we worship Him with firm faith, saying with our lips, and in all sincerity of mind, that He alone is God who created all things. Yet the heathen would not be satisfied with so few gods, but began to worship as gods various giants, and men [1] who, though they lived shamefully, were powerful in worldly affairs, and terrible in their lives.

There was a man living in the island of Crete, whose name was Saturn,[2] so violent and cruel that he devoured his sons when they were born, in an unfatherly manner making their flesh food for himself. Yet he left one alive, though he had previously devoured the brothers. This one was called Jove, malignant and mighty. He drove his father out of the aforesaid island, and would have slain him had he approached. This Jove was so licentious that he married his sister, who was named Juno, a very great goddess. Their daughters were Minerva and Venus, both of whom the father foully debauched; and many of his kinswomen he also infamously defiled. These wicked men were the greatest gods that the heathen worshiped and converted into gods. The son, however, was more worshiped in their foul idolatry than was the father. This Jove was the most venerable of all the gods whom the heathen in their error had;[3] among certain nations he was called Thor,[4] most beloved of the Danish people. His son was named Mars, who continually made dissensions, and stirred up calumnies and misery. The heathen worshiped him as a great god; and as often as they marched

[1] This is the doctrine named from Euhemerus (ca. 300 B.C.), and followed by various early Christian apologists. Cf. Tertullian, *Ad Nat.* 12, 13; *Apol.* 10; Lactantius, *Inst. Div.* 1. 8–15; Augustine, *De Civ. Dei* 18. 8, 12, 13.

[2] Cf. Ælfric, *Lives of Saints*, ed. Skeat, 1. 126; Boethius, ed. Sedgefield, 115. 27–8; 195. 47–9.

[3] See Boethius, ed. Sedgefield, 115. 23–7; 194. 35 ff.

[4] See Ælfric, *Lives of Saints* 2. 265.

out, or decided to fight, they offered their sacrifices in advance to this god, believing that he could aid them greatly in battle, since he loved battle.

There was a man named Mercury while he lived, very crafty and deceitful in deeds, loving thefts and falsehood. The heathen made him a powerful god, offering him gifts at the meeting of the ways, and bringing him sacrifices on the high hills. This god was honored among all the heathen; in Danish he is called Odin.

A certain woman was named Venus, the daughter of Jove, so vile in lust that her father and also her brother had her as a harlot, as did also some others; yet the heathen honor her as a great goddess, as the daughter of their god. Many other gods, and also goddesses, were devised in various ways, and held in great honor throughout the whole world, to the ruin of mankind; but these, notwithstanding their shameful lives, must be reckoned the principal ones. The artful devil who lurks about men led the heathen into the great error of taking for gods foul men who loved sins that please the devil, and brought it to pass that their worshipers also loved their filthiness, and were estranged from Almighty God, who loathes sin and loves purity.

They also appointed a day for the sun and the moon, and for the other gods, giving to each his day[1] — Sunday to the sun, Monday to the moon; the third day they devoted to Mars, their battle-god, that he might aid them. The fourth day they gave, for their own advantage, to the aforesaid Mercury, their great god. The fifth day they solemnly consecrated to Jove, the greatest god. The sixth day they appointed for the shameless goddess called Venus — Frigg in Danish. To the ancient Saturn, father of the

[1] Probably this device was of Babylonian origin (see *Encycl. Brit.* 2. 740–1; 4. 664–5; 21. 126).

gods, they gave, for their own profit, the seventh day,[1] the last of all, though he was the oldest.

Wishing to pay the gods still more honor they bestowed on them stars, as if they had dominion over them — the seven heavenly bodies, the sun and the moon, and the five others which always move toward the east, against the firmament, but which the heaven always turns back. Yet the stars shone in the heavens at the beginning of the world, before the wicked gods were born, or chosen as divinities.

## 15. FROM THE *CANONS*

*Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, ed. Thorpe, p. 445

On Sundays and mass-days the priest shall tell the people in English the meaning of the gospel, and explain also the Paternoster and the Creed as often as he can, as a stimulus to men, that they may know the faith and keep their Christianity. Let the teacher take heed against that which the prophet says, 'They are all dumb dogs, they can not bark.'[2] We ought to bark, and to preach to laymen, lest, for want of instruction, they should perish. In His gospel Christ hath said of unwise teachers, 'If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.'[3] A teacher is blind if he knows not book-learning, and if he deceives laymen through his lack of knowledge. Wherefore be on your guard against this, even as you have need.

## 16. FROM THE *EPISTLE FOR WULFSTAN*

*Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, ed. Thorpe, p. 461

Beloved, ye priests should be provided with books and with vestments, even as becomes your order. A priest should have, in particular, a missal, books of hymns,

[1] Cf. Ælfric, *Hom.* 1. 216; 2. 260, 354. [2] Isa. 56. 10. [3] Matt. 15. 14.

lectionaries, Psalter, manual, penitential, and calendar, and these must be very correct. And he shall have clean vestments for Christ's services. And you should sing Sunday matins and mass matins, always nine responses with nine readings.

And know this, that every chalice should be wrought of molten material, of gold or of silver, of glass or of tin; let it not be of horn, and especially not of wood. Let no man celebrate mass with any other vessel than the chalice which is consecrated to Christ; and let His altar be clean and always well covered, not polluted with filth; and let no man ever celebrate mass without wine.

Be careful also now, I pray, that ye be better and wiser in your spiritual calling in Christ's service, as it is rightly fitting that ye should be, than secular men are in their secular occupations. Long must he study who is to teach, and if he will not learn to be a teacher of right wisdom he shall afterwards be a teacher of great error, as Christ Himself said in His gospel, 'If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.' That guide who has to teach God's people is blind if he neither have learning nor be willing to learn, but misleads his parishioners and himself with them.

MARY W. SMYTH

## WULFSTAN

Wulfstan, the most considerable Old English preacher next to Ælfric, was Bishop of London at least as early as 1001, and in the following year was made Archbishop of York, as well as Bishop of Worcester. He was a witness to two gifts of King Æthelred, one occasion being in 1004; he consecrated the church at Assandun (1020), erected to commemorate Cnut's victory over Edmund Ironside at that place (1016); and he consecrated Ægelnoth as Archbishop of Canterbury in the same year, 1020. He died at York, May 28, 1023.

Wulfstan lived in the third of the three periods of Danish invasion, the first (787–835) being, according to Freeman (*Norman Conquest* 1. 44–5) that of simple plunder, the second (855–97) that of settlement, while the third (980–1016) was that of political conquest. A table of dates and events will throw light upon Wulfstan's homily below:

991. Battle of Maldon (see *Select Translations from Old English Poetry*, pp. 31 ff.). King Æthelred purchases peace from the Danes.
992. Desertion of Ealdorman Ælfric, commander of the fleet.
994. Swend and Olaf Tryggvason besiege London, and ravage Essex, Kent, Sussex, and Hampshire. Peace purchased.
1002. Æthelred orders a massacre of all the Danes in England.
1003. Swend captures Exeter. Treachery of Hugh, a Frenchman, reeve of the city. Renewed treachery of Ealdorman Ælfric.
1005. The worst famine in England that any one could remember.
1006. Kent and Sussex ravaged. The English army melts away without striking a blow.
1007. Tribute paid to the Danes.
1009. Wulfnoth, a captain in the English fleet, flees with twenty ships. Eighty more, sent to capture him, are destroyed in a storm.
1010. Treachery of Ealdorman Eadric, preventing an attack on the Danish fleet under Thurkill.
1011. The worst year of all. Sixteen shires are ravaged, defense being futile.
1013. Swend and Cnut sail up the Humber, receive the submission of all England north of Watling Street, the South assenting.
1014. Wulfstan's *Sermon to the English*.
1016. King Æthelred dies, after his return from Normandy, whither he had fled. Cnut contests the kingdom with Edmund Ironside. Death of Edmund.

The homilies of Wulfstan have not been perfectly distinguished from those of others. Kinard (*Study of Wulfstan's Homilies*, Baltimore, 1897), the latest investigator, accepts fifteen homilies as genuine, and finds nine others which exhibit certain characteristics of his style (p. 60). Napier's edition, Berlin, 1883, is the standard; our homily is No. 33 (pp. 156–67). It was first published by Elstob in 1701 as *Sermo Lupi Episcopi*, and may be

found in Ebeling's (1847), Rieger's (1861), and Sweet's (1876) Readers. See Wülker, *Grundriss*, pp. 481–3, and Kinard (as above), from whom many of our facts are drawn. The *Old English Chronicle* for the period may be consulted with advantage.

Wulfstan's style is marked by much alliteration and assonance, and by a decided rhythm, with balanced clauses; on the other hand, he has almost no tropes or similes.

## WULFSTAN'S SERMON TO THE ENGLISH

### AT A TIME WHEN THE DANES ESPECIALLY PERSECUTED THEM, WHICH WAS IN THE YEAR 1014 FROM THE INCARNATION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Dearly beloved, understand the truth: this world is in haste, and drawing nigh the end. Hence is the later in the world ever the worse, so that things must needs wax very evil before the coming of Antichrist. Likewise, consider earnestly that for these many years the devil has led this people too widely astray; that men have held little faith towards one another, for all their fair speaking; that injustice has too much prevailed in the land; and that they have been few who thought upon a remedy as diligently as they ought. Daily has evil been heaped upon evil, and men have worked iniquity and manifold unrighteousness far too generally throughout this whole nation.

On account of these things we have suffered many losses and indignities; and if we are to expect any relief, we must deserve it better at God's hands than we have done hitherto. For with great deserts have we earned the misery which lies over us; and with exceeding great deserts we must obtain the cure from God, if our condition is henceforth to become better. We know very well that a wide breach demands much mending, and a great fire abundant water if the fire is to be in any wise quenched.

The necessity is urgent upon every man henceforth to keep God's law with diligence, and fulfil God's commandments with uprightness.

Among the heathen no man dares keep back either little or much of that which is ordained for the worship of idols; but we too often everywhere withhold the dues of God. Among the heathen, men dare not diminish any of those things, within or without, which are brought to the idols and appointed for a sacrifice; but we have clean despoiled the inward and the outward of God's house. Moreover, the servants of God are everywhere deprived of reverence and the right of giving sanctuary; but the servants of idols among the heathen, men dare in no manner offend, as men now too generally offend the servants of God in places where Christians ought to keep God's law and afford protection to His servants.

I tell you the truth — a remedy must be found. Too long have the laws of God been declining on every side among this people; the laws of the nation have lapsed unduly; sanctuaries lie too little protected; and the houses of God are clean despoiled of their ancient tribute, and stripped within of all things seemly. Men of religion have this long time been greatly despised; widows wrongfully forced to marry; poor and afflicted men betrayed and grievously ensnared, and sold undeservedly far away from this country, into the power of strangers; children in the cradle enslaved, with bitter injustice, on pretense of petty theft; freeman's right wrested away, thrall-right restricted, alms-right greatly diminished. To sum up most briefly, the laws of God are hated, and instruction despised. For this we all suffer many indignities, as should be evident to every one; and though men deem it not, the loss will be common to all this nation, unless God shall save.

Surely it is plain and manifest, in the case of all of us, that we have hitherto offended more than we amended; and for this cause our nation has endured many inroads. This long time nothing has thriven at home or abroad, but on every hand have been frequent ravaging and famine, burning and bloodshed, robbery and slaughter, plague and pestilence, murrain and disease. Slander and malice and rapine of robbers have sorely afflicted us; tempests oftentimes have blighted our harvests: because, it would seem, for these many years this land has witnessed manifold iniquities and unstable faith between men everywhere. Many a time has kinsman protected his kinsman no more than a stranger, nor father his son, nor, at times, son his own father, nor one brother the other. No one of us has directed his life as he ought, neither those in orders according to the rules, nor laymen according to the law. No man has purposed toward his neighbor so uprightly as he ought, but well-nigh every one of us has betrayed and injured his fellow in word and deed.

How wickedly has nearly every one attacked his neighbor with shameful calumnies, and worse if he might! Here in our land are great breaches of faith toward God and man; and many among us are traitors to their lords in divers fashions. Worst of all treasons in the world it is that a man should betray the soul of his lord; and there is also another very great treason in the world, that a man should plot against his lord's life, or drive him living out of the country; and both these have been wrought in this land. Edward men plotted against, and afterward murdered, and then burned; and Æthelred they drove from his home. Too many sponsors and godchildren have been slain throughout this nation; too many holy places far and wide have perished, because in the past certain men have been lodged

there, such as ought not to have been if reverence were to be shown the sanctuary of God; too many Christian folk have been commonly sold into slavery. Ye may believe that all this is hateful to God.

Yet more: we know too well where the wretched thing has come to pass that a father has sold his son for a price, or a son his mother and brothers into the power of strangers. Whoever will may understand that all these are monstrous and terrible deeds; and still worse and more manifold afflict this nation. Many are forsworn and liars; pledges are broken commonly; and it is plain in this land that the wrath of God lies bitterly upon us. He that can, let him understand.

Alas, can greater shame befall any man, by God's anger, than often befalls us for our just deserts — that if a thrall escape from his lord, and forsake Christendom to go over to the Danes, and it come about afterward that thane and thrall meet in battle, then the thane, if he be foully slain by the thrall, must lie without any wergild for his kinsmen; but if the thane foully slay the thrall whom he once owned, he must pay wergild as for a thane. Degrading laws and shameful tribute are wonted with us, because of God's anger, as whoever is able may understand; and a host of calamities continually attack this nation.

This long time nothing has thriven at home or abroad, but harrying and hatred have been constant on every hand. The English have been long without victory and too sorely dismayed, by reason of the wrath of God. The sea-robbers, by God's permission, have been so strong that one of them will often put to flight ten of us in battle — sometimes less, sometimes more — and all because of our sins. Often ten or twelve of them, one after another, will insult and shamefully abuse the wife of a thane, or perhaps his daughter or

kinswoman, he meanwhile looking on who thought himself proud and powerful and good enough before that came to pass. Often a thrall puts in bonds the thane that was his former lord, and makes him to be a thrall, by reason of God's anger. Alas for the misery, alas for the dishonor among the nations, which the English now endure; and all because of the wrath of our God! Often two or three vikings will drive the multitude of Christian men from sea to sea, out through the provinces enslaved together, to our common disgrace, if we would understand rightly in aught. Yet for all the frequent reproach that we endure, we return honor to them that abuse us. We continually reward them, and they daily oppress us. They harry and smite, bind and insult, spoil and raven, and carry away on shipboard; and lo, what in all these disorders is plain and manifest save the wrath of God upon this nation?

Nor is it any wonder if we are miserable, because we know very well that for these many years men have seldom recked what they wrought, in word or in deed. This our religion, as it seems, has been greatly sinned against by manifold sins and multiplied transgressions: by deeds fell and foul, by covetousness and greed, by theft and robbery, by wrongful selling of men into slavery, by heathen practices, by treasons and plots, by violations of law, by seditions, by attacks of kinsman on kinsman, by manslaughter, by injuries of holy men, by adulteries, incests, and divers fornications. Thereto, as we said before, by violated oaths and broken pledges, and various treacheries far and wide, more than ought to be are ruined and forsworn. Breaches of festivals are commonly committed. There are in this land all too many adversaries of God, malignant persecutors of the Church, and cruel tyrants in overgreat number; proud scorners of divine law and Christian practice, and foolish

mockers, most often of those things that most certainly and rightfully belong to the law of God. Thereby has grown up the common evil wont, that men are ashamed of good deeds rather than of evil, because too often men contemn good deeds with derision, and overmuch revile God-fearing men; and most men despise and greet with too frequent insult such as love righteousness and have in any measure the fear of God. Because men do thus, despising all that they ought to glorify, and hating what they ought to love, they pervert all too many to evil thoughts and acts, so that they are not ashamed to sin greatly, and altogether offend against God Himself; yet because of empty words of abuse they are ashamed to amend their misdeeds, as the books teach: like fools, who, for their infirmity of pride, will not save themselves until the time comes when they cannot though they would.

But, oh, in God's name, let us do as is needful for us — save ourselves as we may by utmost diligence, lest we perish all of us together! Let us do as behooves us, turn toward the right, and in some measure forsake the evil, and earnestly amend those things wherein we aforetime offended. Let us love God and follow God's laws, and perform with eagerness that which we promised when we received baptism, or those promised who were our sponsors in baptism; and let us rightly direct both words and works, and carefully cleanse our hearts, and observe with heed oaths and pledges, and have some faith amongst us, free from wicked practices. Let us often meditate upon the Great Judgment whither we all are bound, and save ourselves with zeal from the raging fire of hell-torment, and secure for ourselves the glory and gladness which God has prepared for such as work His will upon earth. May God help us. Amen.

ELIZABETH W. MANWARING

## SELECTION FROM THE *BLICKLING HOMILIES*

### THE SIGNS OF THE LAST JUDGMENT

*Hom. on Easter Day*, pp. 91–5

These homilies receive their name from Blickling Hall, near Aylsham, in Norfolk, where the manuscript is preserved. The manuscript is dated A.D. 971, as appears from a passage in the sermon for Ascension Day (Holy Thursday). The sole edition is by Richard Morris, for the Early English Text Society, London, 1880. The homily on the dedication of St. Michael's Church contains a remarkable parallel (see Morris' edition, pp. vi, vii) to *Beowulf* 1357ᵇ–64.

The Signs of the Judgment seem to have been derived from 2 (4) Esdras (see the English Apocrypha) 4. 52 ff., blended with Matt. 24. 29–31 (Mark 13. 24, 25; Luke 21. 25); cf. Isa. 54. 4; Ezek. 32. 7; 38. 20; Dan. 12. 2, 3; 1 Cor. 15. 52; 1 Thess. 4. 16; 2 Pet. 3. 12; Rev. 6. 15, 16; 20. 12, 13.

Various Fathers of the Church deal with this subject, especially Ephrem Syrus (see Bousset, as below, p. 38), and Pseudo-Hippolytus (Hippolytus, ed. Bonwetsch and Achelis, $1^2$. 287–309), in a treatise on *The End of the World*, chaps. 37 ff. (English translation in *Ante-Nicene Library* 9. 98–130). Again by Lactantius, *Inst. Div.* 7. 16, 19, whose account reposes upon a Greek acrostic (*Oracula Sibyllina*, ed. Geffcken, 8. 217–250, pp. 153–7, from Constantine the Great's *Oration to the Assembly of the Saints*, chap. 18), a Latin translation of which is found in Augustine, *De Civ. Dei* 18. 23. In this acrostic the Fifteen Signs are clearly discernible. In a passage assigned to Bede (*Works*, Cologne edition, 3. 494) the Fifteen Signs are enumerated, reference being made to Jerome, in whom, however, no trace of the matter can be found. In the Middle Ages there are many versions. In Old English it apparently influenced Cynewulf's *Christ*, and there is a homily on the subject printed in the Bavarian Academy's *Gelehrte Anzeigen* 50 (1860). 350–5. The whole subject is treated by Nölle, with the quotation of many important texts, in Paul und Braune's *Beiträge* 6. 413–76, the English versions being listed on pp. 474–5. See also Bousset, *The Antichrist Legend* (London, 1896), pp. 232–51.

Let us now consider how much awe shall come upon all creatures at this present time, when the Doom draws near; and the manifestation of the day shall be very terrible to all creatures. On that day heaven, earth, and sea, and all things that are therein, shall pass away. So also on account of the same event the sun and moon shall pass away, and all the light of the stars shall fail. And the rood of our Lord, which now puts to flight accursèd spirits on the earth, shall be raised in the course of the stars; and on that day heaven shall be rolled up like a book; on that day earth shall be consumed to ashes, and on that day the sea shall dry up, and all the powers of heaven shall be turned and moved. And six days before this day various marvelous tokens shall befall each day. On the first day, at midday, a great lamentation of all creatures shall take place, and men shall hear a great noise in heaven, as of an army being gathered together and set in array there. Then shall ascend a great bloody cloud from the north, and cover all this heaven; and after the cloud shall come lightning and thunder all the day, and in the evening there shall rain a bloody rain. On the following day there shall be heard in the heavens a great sound of the arraying of armies; and earth shall be moved out of her place, and heaven shall be open at one quarter — on the east; and at evening a great host shall come forth from the open end, and obscure and cover over the heavens; and a bloody and fiery rain shall endeavor to devour and consume this earth, and the heaven shall fall to the four ends of the earth; and all the earth shall be overwhelmed with darkness at the eleventh hour of the day. Then all folk shall say, 'The Lord have mercy upon us and pity us, who was praised by means of angels when He was born in Bethlehem: — then they

cried and thus spake — "Glory be to God in heaven, and to men on earth who are of good will." '[1] On the third day the earth on the north and east parts will speak to one another, and the deep will rage and will devour the earth; and all the powers of the earth shall be changed, and great earthquakes shall happen on that day. After the third hour on the fourth day there shall be mighty thunders in the heavens; and then shall all idols fall down; and then it shall be at sunset, and yet no light shall appear; and the moon shall be quenched and darkness shall come upon all the world, and the stars all day shall run across our sight. And men may see them [the stars] as plainly as at night when it freezes hard. And then on that day they will hate this world's weal and the things that they now love. On the fifth day at noon the heaven will burst asunder from the east unto the west quarter; and then all angelkind shall look through the aperture on mankind. Then shall all men see what it will be at this world's end. They shall flee then to the mountains and hide themselves on account of the presence of the angels, and then shall they speak to the earth, and beseech it to swallow them up and hide them; and they will wish that they never were born of father nor mother. So was it of yore prophesied concerning this time in Christ's book, thus saying, 'Blessed are those that were barren, and blessed are the wombs that have never brought forth, and the breasts which have never given suck.'[2] And then shall they say to the hills and to the mountains: 'Fall upon us, and cover and hide us,[3] that we may no longer endure this horror from these angels. Now is all manifested that we previously had kept secret.' On the sixth day before the third hour, from the four ends of the earth all the world

[1] Lk. 2. 14. [2] Lk. 23. 29. [3] Cf. Rev. 6. 16.

shall then be filled with accursèd spirits, who will endeavor to take great spoil of men's souls, as Antichrist previously did. And when he cometh, then will he threaten to send those souls into eternal punishments who will not obey him. And then at last he himself shall be driven into everlasting woe. So then on that day shall come Saint Michael with a heavenly host of holy spirits, and shall then slay all those accursed folk, and drive them into hell's abyss for their disobeying of God's behests and for their wickednesses. Then shall all creatures see our Lord's power, though mankind now will not acknowledge or recognize it. Then after these things the seventh day will be nigh at hand. And then Saint Michael the Archangel will command the four trumpets to be blown at these four quarters of the earth, and will raise up all bodies from the dead, though they were previously hidden by the earth, or drowned in the water, or devoured by wild animals, or carried off by birds, or torn to pieces by fishes, or in any wise departed from this world. All must rise again then, and go forth to the Doom in such form as they previously adorned themselves; but not with gold nor with purple garments, but with good and holy deeds we must be adorned if we desire then to be on the right hand of the Lord Jesus Christ, along with faithful and chosen souls whom he will send into everlasting light.

Richard Morris

# IV

# LATE ANONYMOUS WORKS

## SELECTIONS FROM *APOLLONIUS OF TYRE*

The Old English version of the romance of *Apollonius of Tyre* was probably made about 1000 A.D. The original story was almost certainly written in Greek, probably in the third century of our era, and by an imitator of Xenophon of Ephesus. This is lost, and is only represented by a Latin version which may have been made in the same century, and in any case not later than the sixth, by a writer of no great education, who introduced Christian terms and conceptions, added some things, and retrenched others. Over a hundred manuscripts of this Latin version are known, of which twelve are in England. The popularity of the romance is also attested by the mediæval and subsequent translations into every modern language.

An abridgment of the Latin version found its way into the *Gesta Romanorum*, as No. 153 of that collection. From Gower it was borrowed by Shakespeare, or whoever was the author of the drama which passes under his name, as the groundwork of *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*, the name Pericles being perhaps adapted from the 'Pyrocles' of Sidney's *Arcadia*. The scenes of *Pericles* which may be compared with our extract are 2. 1–3 and 2. 5.

The Old English *Apollonius* was edited by Thorpe (London, 1834), and again by Zupitza (Herrig's *Archiv*, Vol. 97). It is only a fragment, breaking off in the midst (the end of the present selection), and recommencing near the end of the tale.

Further information will be found in Rohde's *Der Griechische Roman* (2d ed., Leipzig, 1900); Teuffel's *History of Latin Literature*, § 489; Hagen's *Der Roman vom König Apollonius von Tyrus* (Berlin, 1878); Warton's *History of English Poetry* 2. 302–3; Riese's edition of the Latin (Leipzig, 1871), or Ring's (Leipzig, 1888); and Märkisch's *Die Altenglische Bearbeitung der Erzählung von Apollonius von Tyrus: Grammatik und Lateinischer Text* (Berlin, 1899). Besides the Tudor versions, there is a translation in Thorpe's edition, and another — of course not adhering closely to the Old English text — in Swan's rendering of the *Gesta Romanorum* (Bohn Library).

## THE SHIPWRECK

Apollonius bade them all farewell, and went aboard his ship. Now when they had begun to row, and were somewhat advanced on their journey, suddenly the sea's calm was stirred up within the space of two hours, and a great tempest arose, so that the sea smote the stars of heaven, and the welter of the billows raged with the winds. Moreover the northeast winds arose, and the fierce southwest winds battled against them, until the ship went to pieces in this dreadful storm. All of Apollonius' companions perished utterly, and he alone came in safety to Pentapolis, in the land of Cyrene, and there climbed up on the shore. There he stood naked on the beach, and gazing at the sea cried out:

'O Neptune, ravager[1] of the sea, despoiler of man and deceiver of the innocent! Thou art more cruel than King Antiochus. On my account hast thou maintained this cruelty, that I, by thy means, should become destitute and needy, so that the cruel king might the more easily destroy me. Whither can I now turn? what can I ask for? or who will give sustenance to an unknown man?'

## APOLLONIUS AND THE FISHERMAN

While he was thus reasoning with himself, suddenly he saw a certain fisherman coming toward him, to whom he turned and thus dolefully spake: 'Whoever thou art, old man, have pity upon me! Have pity upon me, naked and shipwrecked as I am! I was not born of lowly parentage; but that you may know to whom you show pity, I am Apollonius, Prince of Tyre.'

[1] Supplied from the Latin *prædator*.

Then as soon as the fisherman saw that the young man lay at his feet, he raised him up with compassion, led him to his house, and set before him the food which he had to offer him. And since he desired to show him still more kindness, even to the best of his ability, he tore his cloak in two, and gave half to Apollonius, saying, 'Take what I have to give you and go into the city. Perchance you may find some one who will show you kindness. If you find no one, come hither again, and let my few possessions suffice for us both; and come and fish with me. Nevertheless I adjure you, if ever again by the goodness of God you come to your former dignity, forget not my poor garment.'

Then said Apollonius: 'If I do not remember you when it is again well with me, may I once more suffer shipwreck, and not meet a second time with one like you.'

## THE INCIDENTS IN THE GYMNASIUM

After these words he proceeded on the way which was shown him until he came to the city gate, and there he entered in. And while he was considering whom he should ask for sustenance, he saw a boy running along the street, clothed in a tunic only. He was anointed with oil and girt with a linen cloth, and carried in his hands games such as youth are wont to play in the gymnasium. And he cried with a loud voice, saying: 'Hearken, O citizens; hearken, O foreigners; freeman and slave, noble and burgess! The gymnasium is open!'

When Apollonius heard this, he took off the half-garment that he was wearing, and went into the pool. And when he saw them all at their exercise, he looked about for his peer, but he could find none in the company. Then suddenly came Arcestrates, king of all that people, with a

great throng of his retainers, and entered the gymnasium. And the king began to play ball with his companions. Then Apollonius, as God ordained, joined in the king's game; he ran and caught the ball, and, hitting it with great swiftness, sent it back to the king who was playing. He threw it back again. Apollonius struck it instantly, not allowing it to drop. The king then perceived the agility of the youth, and knew that none was his equal in the game. And he said to his companions: 'Get ye hence; this youth, methinks, is my equal.'

When Apollonius heard the king praise him, he straightway ran and drew near the king, and with skilled hand threw the ball with such speed that it seemed to the king as if he were transformed from an old man to a boy.[1] And after this he ministered most acceptably to the king on his throne, and when Apollonius went out of the gymnasium he led the king by the hand, and so departed the way he had come.

Then after Apollonius had gone, the king said to his retainers: 'I swear by our common salvation that I never had a better bath than I did to-day, because of the service of that young man whom I know not.' And he turned to one of his men and said: 'Go and find out who the young man is who was so agreeable to me to-day.'

So the man went after Apollonius. But when he saw that he was clothed in a squalid cloak, he returned to the king and said: 'The young man for whom you inquired is a shipwrecked man.' Then said the king: 'How do you know that?' The man answered and said: 'Even if he should deny it himself, his clothes would betray him.'

[1] The latter part of this sentence is due to a misunderstanding of the Latin. The original refers to a kind of massage, and makes no reference to ball-playing at this point.

Then said the king: 'Go quickly and say to him, "The king invites you to his feast."'

### APOLLONIUS AT THE FEAST

When Apollonius heard this, he obeyed, and went forth with the man until he arrived at the king's hall. Then the man went in first to the king and said: 'The shipwrecked man for whom you sent is come, but he cannot, for shame, enter without proper attire.' Then the king commanded that he be clothed at once in seemly garments, and bade him come in to the feast.

Then Apollonius went in and sat down opposite the king, in the seat appointed him. And the first course was brought in, and after it the royal banquet. Apollonius, however, ate nothing, though all the others ate and made merry, but gazed upon the gold and silver, and the costly apparel, and the tables, and the royal service. While he was looking sorrowfully at all these, a certain envious old nobleman who sat next the king, seeing Apollonius sit and gaze so sorrowfully at everything and eat nothing, said to the king: 'Good king, behold, the man whom you have so favored is very envious of your possessions.' Then said the king: 'You are mistaken; the young man is envious of nothing that he sees here, but rather shows that he has suffered great loss.' Then King Arcestrates, turning to Apollonius, said with cheerful countenance, 'Young man, make merry with us, and trust in God that you may come into fairer fortune.'

### THE ENTRY OF THE PRINCESS

While the king was speaking, his young daughter suddenly entered, and kissed her father and those about him. But when she came to Apollonius, she turned back to her

father and said: 'Good king and dearest father, who is this young man who sits opposite you in so honorable a place, and has so sorrowful a countenance? I know not what troubles him.' Then said the king: 'Dear daughter, this young man has been shipwrecked, and he pleased me best of all in my play to-day. Therefore I invited him to this feast of ours. I know not who nor whence he is, but if you would know who he is, ask him, for it is fitting that you should know.'

Then the maiden went to Apollonius and said with deference: 'Though you are silent and dejected, yet I perceive your noble rank. Therefore, if it seem not too irksome to you, tell me your name and relate me your misfortunes.'[1] Then said Apollonius: 'If you must needs ask me my name, I reply that I lost it at sea; if you will know of my noble rank, know that I lost it at Tarsus.' The maiden said: 'Speak to me more plainly, that I may understand.' Then Apollonius told her all his adventures, and at the end of his recital tears fell from his eyes.

When the king saw this, he turned to his daughter and said: 'Dear daughter, you have done wrong in wishing to know his name and his adventures. You have now renewed his old sorrow; so I bid you give him whatsoever you will.' When the maiden heard that her father sanctioned what she would fain do herself, she said to Apollonius: 'Apollonius, now indeed you are one of us; cease your sorrowing, and, since I have my father's leave, I will make you rich.' Apollonius thanked her, and the king rejoiced in his daughter's benevolence, and said to her: 'Dear daughter, have your harp brought in, . . .[2] and banish this young man's sadness.'

[1] So Dido requests Æneas to relate his adventures.
[2] A clause not clear in the Old English.

## A LESSON IN MUSIC

Then she went out and had her harp brought in, and as soon as she began to play she accompanied the music of the harp with winsome song. And all the courtiers praised her for her skill in music, but Apollonius alone remained silent. Then said the king: 'Apollonius, thou dost wrong, since every one praises my daughter for her skill in music, and you alone censure her by your silence.' Apollonius said: 'O good king, believe me when I say that I see your daughter has indeed chanced upon some skill in music, but she has never learned it thoroughly. But now bid them give me the harp, and you will then realize what you do not.' King Arcestrates said: 'Apollonius, I must acknowledge that thou art learned in all things.'

Then the king bade them give the harp to Apollonius. And Apollonius went out and clothed himself, and set a crown upon his head, and took the harp in his hand, and entered and stood before them in such wise that the king and his courtiers thought that he was not Apollonius, but Apollo, the heathen god. Then quiet and silence reigned throughout the hall. And Apollonius took the plectrum and touched the harp-strings with skill, and accompanied the music of the harp with winsome song. And the king himself and all present cried aloud and praised him. After this, Apollonius put aside the harp and acted before them, and performed many fair things which were unknown and strange in that nation. And whatever he performed pleased them all greatly.

Now when the king's daughter saw that Apollonius was so well trained in all these accomplishments, she fell in love with him. And when the feast was at length over, the maiden said to the king: 'Dear father, you gave

me permission, a little while since, to bestow upon Apollonius whatever I wished from your treasury.' King Arcestrates said to her: 'Give him what you will.' Then she went out very blithely and said: 'Master Apollonius, I give you, by my father's leave, two hundred pounds in gold, and four hundred pounds in silver, and an abundance of costly raiment, and twenty slaves.' And she said to the slaves: 'Bring the things with you which I have promised my master Apollonius, and lay them in the banquet-hall before my friends.' And they did even as the princess bade, and all who saw her gifts praised them. Then the feast came to an end, and all the people rose and saluted the king and the princess, and bade them farewell, and went home. And Apollonius, too, said: 'Good king, pitier of the poor, and princess, lover of learning, fare ye well!' He then turned to the slaves whom the maiden had given him, and said: 'Take the things which the princess has given me, and let us go to our inn, and rest.'

## APOLLONIUS AS TEACHER

But the maiden, fearing she might not see Apollonius hereafter as often as she wished, went to her father and said: 'Good king, are you satisfied that Apollonius, who has been so enriched by us to-day, should go hence in this manner, and that wicked men should come and rob him?' The king replied: 'You say well. Bid him find a place where he may repose with honor.' So the maiden did as she was bidden, and Apollonius received the dwelling appointed him, and entering, thanked God, who had not deprived him of princely dignity and comfort. But the maiden passed a restless night, inflamed with love of the words and songs which she had heard from Apollonius. And when

day came she could wait no longer, but as soon as it was light went and sat beside her father's bed. Then said the king: 'Dear daughter, why are you thus wakeful?' The maiden said: 'The accomplishments which I heard yesterday have kept me awake. Now I pray you, therefore, give me our guest Apollonius for a teacher.' And the king was greatly pleased, and bade summon Apollonius, and said to him: 'My daughter desires to have instruction from you in the delightful arts which you possess; if you will agree to this, I swear to you by the wealth of my kingdom that whatever you lost at sea I will restore to you on land.' When Apollonius heard this he received the maiden as a pupil, and taught her as well as he himself had learned. . . .

## THE THREE SUITORS

It came to pass, some few days after this, that King Arcestrates took Apollonius by the hand and went with him out into the public square. And at length three learned and noble men met them, who had long desired the king's daughter in marriage. All three together with one voice greeted the king. The king, smiling, turned to them and said: 'What would you, that you greet me with one voice?' And one of them answered and said: 'It is long ago that we asked you for your daughter, and you have often tormented us by postponing the matter. Therefore we have come hither to-day together. We are your citizens, sprung of noble blood; now, we pray you, choose of us three which you will have for a son-in-law.' Then said the king: 'You have not chosen a seasonable time; my daughter is at present very busy with her studies, but that I may not seem to keep deferring you, write your names and your marriage portions on a tablet, and I will send the tablets to my

daughter, so that she herself may choose which one of you she will.' The young men did so, and the king took the tablets and sealed them with his ring, and gave them to Apollonius, saying: 'Master Apollonius, if you do not object, take these tablets and carry them to your pupil.' And Apollonius took the tablets and went to the royal hall.

## THE PRINCESS CHOOSES

When the maiden saw Apollonius, she said: 'Master, why do you come thus alone?' Apollonius said: 'Lady, . . .[1] take these tablets which your father sends you, and read them.' The maiden took the tablets and read the names of the three young men, but she did not find there the name of the one she desired. When she had read the tablets, she turned to Apollonius and said: 'Master, would it not grieve you if I should choose a husband in this way?' Apollonius replied: 'No, but I should rejoice, rather, that you could yourself show in writing — by means of the learning which you have received from me — which of them you desire. My wish is that you choose a husband where you will.' But the maiden replied: 'Dear master, if you loved me, you would be grieved.' After saying this, she boldly wrote another tablet, sealed it, and gave it to Apollonius. Apollonius took it out to the forum, and gave it to the king. The tablet read as follows: 'Good king and dearest father, as you graciously give me leave to choose the man I desire for a husband, I will tell you the truth; I choose the shipwrecked man; and if you are surprised that so modest a maiden should write thus forwardly, remember that I have confided to the wax, which knows no shame, what I myself could not speak for shame.'

[1] Phrase unintelligible.

When the king had read the note through, he knew not what shipwrecked man she meant. Therefore he turned to the three young men and said: 'Which one of you has been shipwrecked?' And one of them, whose name was Ardalius, said: 'I have been shipwrecked.' Another answered him and said: 'Be still! Plague take you, so that you be not sound nor whole! You have ever been my companion in study, and have never been outside the city gates without me. Where were you ever shipwrecked?' When the king could not find out which one of them had been shipwrecked, he turned to Apollonius and said: 'Apollonius, take this note and read it. Perhaps you, who were present when it was written, may know what I do not.' So Apollonius took the tablet and read it, and as soon as he realized that it was he whom the maiden loved, he blushed. When the king noticed this, he took Apollonius' hand, and went with him some distance from the young men, and said: 'Do you know the shipwrecked man?' Apollonius said: 'Good king, if it be your will, I do know him.' And when the king saw that Apollonius was covered with blushes, he understood the remark, and said: 'Rejoice, rejoice, Apollonius, for my daughter desires only what I wish myself. And, truly, in matters of this kind, nothing can happen but by God's will.' Arcestrates then turned to the three young men and said: 'Rightly did I say to you just now that you came at an unseasonable time for my daughter; but when she can be released from her study I will send you word.' So they went home with this answer, and King Arcestrates kept hold of Apollonius' hand and led him home with him, not as a guest, but as if he were his son-in-law. But finally the king released his hand, and went alone into his daughter's bower, and said: 'Dear daughter, whom have you chosen for a husband?' The

maiden fell at her father's feet and said: 'Most gracious father, hear your daughter's desire. I love the shipwrecked man who was deceived by unkind fortune, but, lest you doubt whom I mean, it is Apollonius that I desire, and if you will not give him to me you will lose your daughter.' The king could no longer endure his daughter's tears, but raised her up and said to her: 'Beloved daughter, be in no wise afraid, you have chosen a husband who pleases me well.' Then he went out to Apollonius and said: 'Master Apollonius, I have inquired into the desire of my daughter's heart, and among other things she said, with tears: "You swore to Apollonius that if he would be obedient to my wish and teach me, you would restore to him whatever the sea took from him. Now since he has been obedient to your command and to my will, I will follow after him in both my loving and my learning."'[1]

SAMUEL B. HEMINGWAY

## THE HARROWING OF HELL

The mediæval doctrine of the harrowing of hell (cf. OE. *hergian*, 'to despoil'), apparently belongs, in its more elaborate form, to the fourth century A.D., but although thus comparatively late in its development, it was an important, popular, and wide-spread belief. It depends ultimately on such passages of Scripture as Ps. 24. 7–12; 68. 18; 107. 9 ff.; Isa. 9. 2; Zech. 11. 11; Matt. 27. 52–3; 1 Pet. 3. 19; 4. 6; but more important than any of these, perhaps, is Eph. 4. 8–9: 'When He ascended up on high, He led captivity captive. . . . He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth.' Interesting traces of this belief

[1] The OE. MS. breaks off at this point. According to the Latin version, after the marriage of Apollonius he hears of the death of Antiochus, and sets sail for Antioch. The story then continues much as in the Shakespearean *Pericles*, Acts 3–5. The OE. fragment recommences with the tale many years later.

remain in modern times in the statement of the Apostles' Creed, 'He descended into hell,' and in many Easter hymns.

Evidences of its effect upon earlier literature are innumerable. See the Old English poem, *The Harrowing of Hell;* the *Christ* of Cynewulf, Part II; the closing passage of *The Dream of the Rood;* and *Blickling Homilies*, pp. 85–9. Other references to OE., as well as copious references to patristic literature, are given by Cook, *The Christ of Cynewulf*, pp. 130–1 (Boston, 1900). For the effect of the legend on later English and Continental literature, see Wülker's *Das Evangelium Nicodemi in der Abendländischen Literatur* (Paderborn, 1872). Perhaps the most interesting occurrences of the belief appearing in Middle English literature are in the several mystery plays on the subject.

Our extract is taken from an Old English version, dating probably from the eleventh century, of the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, which is probably the best-known of the New Testament apocryphal books. The original Greek and Latin texts may be found in Tischendorf's *Evangelia Apocrypha* (Leipzig, 1853); English translations in Cowper's *Apocryphal Gospels* (3d ed., London, 1870), and by Walker in *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 8 (rev. Am. ed., Buffalo, 1886). The Old English text of the present extract is printed by Bright in his *Anglo-Saxon Reader*, pp. 129–39. For the connection of Enoch and Elijah with Antichrist, see Bousset's *Antichrist Legend*, chap. 14.

Carinus and Leuticus wrote in this wise of the matter, saying: 'Behold! while we were with all our forefathers in the depths of hell, there came a light into those murky shades, so that we were all illumined and rejoiced. It was suddenly as though the golden sun had been kindled in our presence there, and shined upon us all; whereupon Satan and all that raging host were sore afraid, and said: "What is this light that shineth so sudden upon us?" And straightway all the race of men there present, our father Adam and all the patriarchs and prophets, rejoiced at that great light, saying: "This is the Prince of the Light eternal, even as God promised us that He would

send that Light eternal unto us." Then Isaiah the prophet lifted up his voice and spake: "This is that Light proceeding from the Father — even the Son of God — according as I foretold on earth when I prophesied, saying that the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali and the river Jordan and the people that sat in darkness should see a great light, and they that dwelt in the land of the shades should have light.[1] And now it is come and shineth upon us who formerly sat in the shadow of death." Then the prophet Simeon spake unto them all as they rejoiced: "Glorify Christ the Lord, the Son of God, whom I bore into the temple in my arms, saying: 'Thou art a light and a comfort before the face of all people, and the glory and honor of thy people Israel.'"[2] And as Simeon spake thus, all that company of saints were greatly rejoiced. And thereafter there came as it were a clap of thunder, and all the saints cried aloud, saying: "Who art thou?" And a voice answered them saying: "I am John, prophet of the Most High, and I am come before Him to prepare his way, and to promote the salvation of his people."[3]

'And Adam, hearing this, spake unto his son named Seth and said: "Recount unto thy children and these patriarchs whatsoever things thou heardest from the archangel Michael when I sent thee to the gate of Paradise to bid the Lord send His angel with thee, and give thee the oil from the tree of mercy that thou mightest anoint my body therewith, what time I was grievous sick." And Seth, the son of Adam, drawing near unto the holy patriarchs and prophets, spake: "Behold, as I was beseeching the Lord at the gate of Paradise, Michael the archangel appeared unto me and said: 'I am sent from God unto thee, and I am appointed guardian over all human bodies.

[1] Isa. 9. 1–2. [2] Lk. 2. 30 ff. [3] Lk. 1. 76–7.

Now I say unto thee, O Seth, that it behooveth thee not to labor with prayer and lamentation to beg the oil of the tree of mercy, that thou mayst anoint therewith thy father Adam for his bodily disease, inasmuch as there are not yet fulfilled the five thousand and five hundred years which must pass ere he be healed; but then cometh the merciful Christ who shall lead thy father Adam into Paradise to the tree of mercy.'" And when they had all heard this, the patriarchs and the prophets, and all the holy men who were in that place of torment, rejoiced exceedingly and glorified God.

'Terrifying was it when Satan, the prince of hell and captain of death, spake unto Hell: "Make thyself ready now to receive Christ, who hath glorified Himself and is the Son of God, yet also Man, and even death itself is afraid of Him — 'My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death.'[1] Therefore is he a mighty Adversary, working evil unto me and unto thee; and many that I had subdued and put beneath my feet — the blind and the halt, the crippled and the leper — all these will he take from thee." Then Hell, being right fierce and savage, made answer unto Satan, that ancient devil, saying: "Who is He so strong and mighty, if man He be, [among those] whom we twain had formerly imprisoned, unafraid of death? For all who had dominion upon earth thou hast drawn unto me by thy might, and I hold them fast; and if thou art as mighty as formerly thou wast, who is the man and the Saviour that feareth not thy valor? But verily I know that if He is so mighty in His human estate that He feareth neither us nor death, then He is so valiant in His divinity that naught can withstand

[1] Mark 14. 34. The Old English is here somewhat vague and contradictory, owing to the fact that it does not translate the Latin exactly.

Him. And I know that if death feareth Him, He shall take thee captive, and woe shall be unto thee for evermore." And Satan, prince of the pit, made answer unto Hell, saying: "Why dost thou hesitate, and why art thou afraid to receive the Saviour, foe unto me and thee alike, inasmuch as I did tempt Him, and did enrage the Jews, and did arouse them all to wrath against Him; and I caused Him to be pierced with a spear, and to be given vinegar to drink mingled with gall; and I caused men to make a rood-tree for Him, and to hang and nail Him there? And now finally cometh His death, and I will lead Him unto thee, and He shall be subject unto me and thee." And Hell right fiercely spake: "Look that thou quit thyself in such wise that He take not the dead from me; for here are many eager to be gone from me, that they may not dwell within me. But I know that they will not depart from me by their own strength, saving God Almighty take them from me — even He who took Lazarus from me, whom I held four days fast bound in death, and yet at His command yielded him up alive." Then answered Satan, saying: "It is even He who took Lazarus from us twain." Then spake Hell: "Lo, I adjure thee, by thy might and mine, never to permit Him to enter into me; for when I heard the word of His command I was sore afraid, and all my wicked thanes were terrified and afflicted with me, so that we could not hold Lazarus, but he shook himself even as an eagle when he will soar forth in mighty flight; even so he hastened from us, and the earth which held the dead body yielded it up alive. And now I know that He who did all this is strong and mighty in the Lord, and if thou bringest Him unto me, all those that are imprisoned in this cruel prison, and bound in these fetters of sin, He

will take from me by His divine might and lead them into life."

'But as they were thus speaking, there was a voice heard and a dread cry, loud as a clap of thunder, saying: *Tollite portas, principes, vestras, et elevamini, portæ æternales, et introibit Rex gloriæ*, which is to say in English: "Ye chiefs, lift up your gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in."[1] But when Hell heard this, she spake unto Satan her lord: "Depart from me straightway, and get thee out of my dwelling, and if thou art as mighty as thou hast said, do thou fight now against this King of glory, and let it be between thee and Him." And therefore Hell drove Satan from his throne, and said to her wicked thanes: "Lock ye now the dread gates of brass, and make fast their bars of iron; and do ye resist mightily, and hold fast our captives, that we be not ourselves led captive." Now when the multitude of saints there present heard these words, they cried all with one voice, saying unto Hell: "Open thy gates, that the King of glory may come in." And moreover David said: "Did I not prophesy unto you when I was upon earth alive: 'Praise ye the Lord for His goodness, for He will show His wonderful works unto the children of men, and will break asunder the gates of brass and the bars of iron, and will deliver them from the path of their unrighteousness?'"[2] And thereafter spake the prophet Isaiah to all the saints there present: "And did I not say unto you while I was yet upon earth alive that the dead should arise and many graves be opened, and that men upon earth should rejoice because salvation should come unto them from the Lord?"[3] And when all the saints heard this from the prophet Isaiah, they said

[1] Ps. 24. 7. [2] Cf. Ps. 107. 15 ff. [3] Cf. Isa. 26. 19.

unto Hell: "Open thy gates; now shalt thou be weak and devoid of thy strength, yea, utterly vanquished."

'And as they were thus speaking, there came suddenly a mighty voice, as it were a clap of thunder, crying: "Ye lords, lift up your gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." But when Hell heard that cry a second time, she cried again, saying: "Who is the King of glory?" And David answered her and said: "These words I know full well, yea, I myself did sing these very words while I was upon earth, saying that the Lord himself would from heaven behold the earth and hear the groaning of the prisoner.[1] And now, thou most foul and stinking Hell, open thy gates, that the King of glory may come in."

'As David was thus speaking, the glorious King — our Lord of heaven — did come in the likeness of man, and He illumined those everlasting shades, and rent the bonds of sin asunder, and delivered all our forefathers from the darkness where they had dwelt so long. But Hell and Death, and their accursed host and those cruel thanes, when they saw and heard were struck with terror, inasmuch as they saw so bright a light shining in their realms. And suddenly they beheld Christ seat himself upon the throne as laying claim unto it for Himself, and they cried, saying: "We are vanquished by Thee, and we ask Thee who Thou art, Thou that without strife or stain hast by Thy mighty strength humbled our power? And who art Thou, so great and yet so small, so abased and yet so exalted, and who art Thou so wondrous, that in the likeness of a single man dost overcome us? So, art Thou not He who lay dead in the grave, and art come hither unto us alive, and because of Thy death the whole creation and all

[1] Cf. Ps. 102. 19, 20.

the stars are troubled, and Thou alone of all the dead art gone free, and all our host Thou hast mightily disturbed. And who art Thou that hast sent abroad this light, and with Thy divine might and brightness hast blinded the sinful shades, and likewise all this host of devils hast sorely terrified?" And all the devils cried with one voice: "Whence art Thou, O Thou Saviour, Thou man so mighty and so bright in Thy strength, being without stain and untarnished by any crime? All the earth has been subject unto us till now. And earnestly we pray Thee who Thou art, Thou so excellent, who art come unto us, and wilt take from us all those whom we have long held in bondage. Or peradventure art Thou that Saviour of whom Satan our lord spake unto us, saying that in Thy death he would have dominion over all the earth?"

'But the King of Glory, our heavenly Lord, would have no more words from the devils, but trod the damnèd Death far under foot; and He seized Satan and bound him fast, and gave him over into the power of Hell. And she received him even as she was bidden by our heavenly Lord. Then spake Hell unto Satan: "Lo, thou Prince of all perdition, author and source of every ill, father of all criminals, thou who wast the lord of all death, source of all arrogance, how didst thou dare to send this purpose into the Jews that they did crucify the Saviour, though thou knewest there was no guilt in Him? And by that tree and cross thou hast spilled all thy bliss, and in that thou didst crucify the King of glory thou didst evil unto thee and me alike; and understand now how many eternal pangs and endless torments thou dost suffer in mine everlasting thraldom." Now when the King of glory heard how Hell spake unto that fierce Satan, He said unto her: "Let Satan be in thy power, and be ye twain for ever damned, world without

end, in the spot where ye have long held Adam and the children of the prophets."

'And then the glorious Lord stretched forth his right hand, saying: "All ye my saints, ye who bear my likeness, come unto me; and ye who were lost through the fruit of the tree, behold, through the rood-tree on which I was crucified shall ye vanquish Death and the devil." Then straightway did the saints draw near unto the Saviour's hand; and the Saviour took Adam by the right hand, saying unto him: "Peace be unto thee, O Adam, and unto all thy children." Then Adam fell down and kissed the Saviour's knee, and in tearful salutation cried out with mighty voice: "I praise thee, O Lord of heaven, that wast willing to deliver me out of this torment of Hell." And the Lord put forth His hand, and made the sign of the cross upon Adam and upon all His saints; and He drew Adam by the right hand out of Hell, and all the saints followed after them. And the holy David cried with a loud voice, saying: "O sing unto the Lord a new song, for He hath showed marvelous things unto all people, and He hath made known His salvation in the sight of all nations, and manifested forth His righteousness."[1] And all the saints answered him saying: "For this be glory unto God, and honor unto all His saints. Amen. Alleluia."

'The holy Lord, who was holding Adam by the hand, delivered it unto the archangel Michael, and Himself entered into heaven; and all the saints followed after the archangel Michael, and he led them into Paradise with glorious rejoicing. But as they were entering in, they met two aged men, and all the saints straightway asked them, saying: "Who are ye who were not in hell with us, and are not yet dead, and nevertheless your bodies are together

[1] Cf. Ps. 98. 1 and 2.

in Paradise?" And the other answered them and said: "I am Enoch, and I was brought hither by the word of God, and this is Elijah the Tishbite with me. He was brought hither in a chariot of fire, and we twain have not yet tasted death, and we are to await Antichrist with divine signs and tokens, and we are to fight against him; and we shall be slain by him in Jerusalem and he also by us; but we shall be quickened again in the space of three and a half[1] days, and we shall be raised up in clouds."

'But while Enoch and Elijah were thus speaking, there came a certain man of miserable aspect, having the likeness of a cross upon his shoulders, and the saints saw him straightway, and spake unto him: "Who art thou whose aspect is as that of a malefactor, and what is the symbol that thou hast upon thy shoulder?" He answered them and said: "Verily thou sayest that I was a malefactor and wrought all manner of evil upon earth, but the Jews crucified me with the Saviour, and I saw all things that were done by the Saviour on the cross, and I straightway believed that He was the Lord of all creation, the Almighty King; and I eagerly begged Him, saying: 'Lord, remember me when thou comest into Thy kingdom.'[2] And he hearkened unto my prayer, saying unto me: 'Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise'; and He gave me this likeness of the cross, and said: 'Go into Paradise with this symbol, and if the angel-guardian of the gate of Paradise forbid thee to enter, show unto him this likeness of the cross, and say unto him that Christ the Saviour, the Son of God, that was crucified but now, did send thee thither.' And all these things did I say unto the angelic guard, and he straightway led me in by the right half of the gate of Paradise, and he bade me wait, saying unto me: 'Wait

[1] Cf. Dan. 7. 25; 12. 7; Rev. 11. 9, 11. [2] Lk. 23. 43.

here until all the race of men shall be gone in, father Adam and all his children, and all the saints who were with him in hell.'" And all the patriarchs and prophets, when they heard the words of the malefactor, spake with one voice: "Blessed be the Lord Almighty and the Father everlasting, who gave thee such remission of thy sins, and with such grace led thee unto Paradise." He answered and said: "Amen."'

These are the divine and holy mysteries which the two prophets, Carinus and Leuticus, truly beheld and heard.

CHAUNCEY B. TINKER

# V

# LATIN WORKS BY OLD ENGLISH WRITERS

# SELECTIONS FROM THE MINOR WORKS OF BEDE[1]

## 1. THE ENGLISH MONTHS

*De Temporum Ratione* 15

The ancient English peoples — for it does not seem to me proper to explain the yearly observance of other nations, and to keep silence concerning my own — reckoned their months by the course of the moon, just as they were named from the moon in Hebrew and Greek. Accordingly, as they called the moon *mōna*, the month was called *mōnath*. The first month, which the Romans name January, is with them Giuli.[2] Then follow February, Solmōnath; March, Hrēdmōnath; April, Ēosturmōnath; May, Thrimilchi; June, Lītha; July, also Lītha; August, Wēodmōnath; September, Hālegmōnath; October, Winterfylleth; November, Blōtmōnath; December, Giuli, the same as for January. They began the year with December 25, the day we now celebrate as Christmas; and the very night to which we attach special sanctity they designated by the heathen term *mōdraniht*, that is, the mothers' night — a name bestowed, I suspect, on account of the ceremonies which they performed while watching this night through.

The peoples who welcomed the year in the same way also assigned three lunar months to each season of the year. When, however, an embolism occurred, that is, a year of thirteen lunar months, they added the intercalated month to the summer, so that in that case three months

[1] For prefatory note on Bede, see pp. 3, 4. [2] Mod. Eng. 'Yule.'

in succession were called Līth. Such a year was known as *thrilīthi*, having four months of summer, and three of each of the other seasons.

The general division of the year was into two seasons, winter and summer, summer comprising the six months in which the days are longer than the nights, and winter the others. Hence the month with which they began the winter season was called Winterfylleth, a name compounded of the terms for winter and full moon, because from the full moon of that month winter was esteemed to begin.

It will not be foreign to our purpose if I endeavor to interpret the names of their other months. The months called Giuli receive their name from the sun's change to a longer day, since the first precedes, and the second follows. Solmōnath may be rendered 'month of cakes,' cakes being offered in this month to their gods.[1] Hrēdmōnath[2] was named from their goddess Hrēda, to whom they sacrificed in this month. Ēosturmōnath, which is now interpreted as 'Paschal month,' had its name from their goddess Easter (*Ēostre*), to whom they held festivals in this month; thus in naming the Paschal season after her, they designate the joys of a new celebration by the customary term applied to an ancient observance. Thrimilchi was so called because in that month milking was performed three times a day, such being then the richness of Britain, or perhaps rather of Germany, from which the English people entered Britain. Līth[3] means delightful, or navigable, because in both of these months the serenity of the air is delightful, and the seas are wont to be navigated. Wēodmōnath is the month of weeds, since then they most abound. Hālegmōnath is the month

[1] Cf. Jer. 7. 18.

[2] Grimm (*Deutsche Mythologie*, p. 267) associates this with OE. *hrēð*, victory,' 'glory.'

[3] In Old English, *līðe* means 'mild,' 'gentle,' and *līðan*, 'to sail.'

of sacred rites. Winterfylleth is as much as to say 'winter full moon.' Blōtmōnath is the month of sacrifices, because in that month they consecrated to their gods the animals that they were about to kill. Thanks be unto Thee, O good Jesus, who hast turned us away from these vanities, and hast granted us to offer to Thee the sacrifices of praise.

ALBERT S. COOK

## 2. SELECTIONS FROM THE *LIFE OF ST. CUTHBERT*[1]

*Works*, ed. Giles, 4. 202 ff.

### CUTHBERT'S YOUTH

The beginning of our history of the blessed Cuthbert is hallowed by Jeremy the prophet, who, in exaltation of the anchorite's perfect state, says: 'It is good for a man when he hath borne the yoke from his youth; he shall sit alone, and shall be silent, because he shall raise himself above himself.'[2] For, inspired by the sweetness of this good, Cuthbert, the man of God, from his early youth bent his neck beneath the yoke of the monastic institution, and when occasion presented itself, having laid fast hold of the anachoretic life, he rejoiced to sit apart for no small space of time, and for the sweetness of divine meditation to hold his tongue silent from human colloquy. But that he should be able to do this in his advanced years was the effect of God's grace inciting him gradually to the way of truth from his early childhood; for even to the eighth

[1] Cuthbert died March 20, A.D. 687. For his life, and the wanderings of his body after death, see the article in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*, or lives by Eyre (3d ed., 1887) and Raine (1828); cf. Scott, *Marmion* 2. 14 ff. His tomb, and various relics, are in the cathedral of Durham.

[2] Cf. Lam. 3. 27, 28.

year of his life, which is the first year of boyhood succeeding to infancy, he gave his mind to such plays and enjoyments alone as boys delight in, so that it might be testified of him as it was of Samuel, 'Moreover Cuthbert knew not yet the Lord, neither had the voice of the Lord been revealed to him.'[1] Such was the panegyric of his boyhood who in more ripened age was destined perfectly to know the Lord, and, opening the ears of his mind, to imbibe the voice of God. He took delight, as we have stated, in mirth and clamor; and, as was natural at his age, rejoiced to attach himself to the company of other boys, and to share in their sports; and because he was agile by nature and of a quick mind, he often prevailed over them in their boyish contests, and frequently, when the rest were tired, he alone would hold out, and look triumphantly to see if any remained to contend with him for victory. For in jumping, running, wrestling, or any other bodily exercise, he boasted that he could surpass all those who were of the same age, and even some that were older than himself. For when he was a child, he knew as a child, he thought as a child; but afterwards, when he became a man, he most abundantly laid aside all those childish things.[2]

And indeed divine Providence found from the first a worthy preceptor to curb the sallies of his youthful mind. For as Trumwine of blessed memory told me on the authority of Cuthbert himself, there were one day some customary games going on in a field, and a large number of boys were got together, among whom was Cuthbert, and in the excitement of boyish whims, several of them began to bend their bodies into various forms. On a sudden, one of them, apparently about three years old, runs up to Cuthbert, and in a firm tone exhorts him not to indulge in

[1] Cf. 1 Sam. 3. 7.

[2] Cf. 1 Cor. 13. 11.

idle play and follies, but to cultivate the powers of his mind as well as those of his body. When Cuthbert made light of his advice the boy fell to the ground, and shed tears bitterly. The rest run up to console him, but he persists in weeping. They ask him why he burst out crying so unexpectedly. At length he made answer, and turning to Cuthbert, who was trying to comfort him, 'Why,' said he, 'do you, holy Cuthbert, priest and prelate, give yourself up to those things which are so opposite to your nature and rank? It does not become you to be playing among children when the Lord has appointed you to be a teacher of virtue, even to those who are older than yourself.' Cuthbert, being a boy of a good disposition, heard these words with evident attention, and pacifying the crying child with affectionate caresses, immediately abandoned his vain sports, and, returning home, began from that moment to exhibit an unusual decision both of mind and character, as if the same spirit which had spoken outwardly from the mouth of the boy were now beginning to exert its influence inwardly in his heart.

### A Vision

It chanced upon a time that he was tending a flock of sheep entrusted to his care on some distant mountains. One night, whilst his companions were sleeping, and he himself was awake, as he was wont to be, and engaged in prayer, on a sudden he saw a long stream of light break through the darkness of the night, and in the midst of it a company of the heavenly host descended to the earth, and having received among them a spirit of surpassing brightness, returned without delay to their heavenly home. The young man, beloved of God, was struck with the sight, and, stimulated to earn for himself

eternal life and happiness among God's mighty ones, he forthwith offered up praise and thanksgivings to the Lord, and called upon his companions with brotherly exhortations to imitate his example. 'Miserable men that we are,' said he, 'while we are resigning ourselves to sleep and idleness, we take no thought to behold the light of God's holy angels who never sleep. Behold, whilst I was awake and praying during a short period of the night, I saw such great miracles of God. The door of heaven was opened, and there was led in thither, amidst an angelic company, the spirit of some holy man, who now, for ever blessed, beholds the glory of the heavenly mansion, and Christ its King, whilst we still grovel amid this earthly darkness: and I think it must have been some holy bishop, or some favored one from out of the company of the faithful, whom I saw thus carried into heaven amid so much splendor by that large angelic choir.'[1] As the man of God said these words, the hearts of the shepherds were kindled up to reverence and praise. When the morning was come, he found that Aidan, bishop of the church of Lindisfarne, a man of exalted piety, had ascended to the heavenly kingdom at the very moment of his vision. Immediately, therefore, he delivered over the sheep which he was feeding to their owners, and determined forthwith to enter a monastery.

### Cuthbert as Teacher

After the death of Boisil, Cuthbert took upon himself the duties of the office before mentioned, and for many years discharged them with the most pious zeal, as became a saint; for he not only furnished precept and example to his brethren of the monastery, but sought to lead the minds of the neighboring people to the love of heavenly

[1] Cf. pp. 48 ff.

things. Many of them, indeed, disgraced the faith which they professed by unholy deeds; and some of them, in the time of mortality, neglecting the sacrament of their creed, had recourse to idolatrous remedies, as if by charms or amulets, or any other mysteries of the magical art, they were able to avert a stroke inflicted upon them by the Lord. To correct these errors, he often went out from the monastery, sometimes on horseback, sometimes on foot, and preached the way of truth to the neighboring villages, as Boisil his predecessor had done before him. It was at this time customary for the English people to flock together when a clerk or priest entered a village, and listen to what he said, that so they might learn something from him, and amend their lives. Now Cuthbert was so skilful in teaching, and so zealous in what he undertook, that none dared to conceal from him their thoughts, but all acknowledged what they had done amiss; for they supposed that it was impossible to escape his notice, and they hoped to merit forgiveness by an honest confession. He was mostly accustomed to travel to those villages which lay in out-of-the-way places among the mountains, which by their poverty and natural horrors deterred other visitors. Yet even here did his devoted mind find exercise for its powers of teaching, insomuch that he often remained a week, sometimes two or three, nay, even a whole month, without returning home; but, dwelling among the mountains, taught the poor people both by the words of his preaching and also by his own holy conduct.

### Cuthbert's Penance

Here also, as elsewhere, he would go forth when others were asleep, and, having spent the night in watchfulness, return home at the hour of morning prayer. Now one

night a brother of the monastery, seeing him go out alone, followed him privately to see what he would do. But he, when he left the monastery, went down to the sea which flows beneath, and, going into it until the water reached his neck and arms, spent the night in praising God.[1] When the dawn of day approached, he came out of the water, and, falling on his knees, began to pray again. While he was doing this, two quadrupeds called otters came up from the sea, and, lying down before him on the sand, breathed upon his feet, and wiped them with their hair; after which, having received his blessing, they returned to their native element. Cuthbert himself returned home in time to join in the accustomed hymns with the other brethren. The brother who waited for him on the heights was so terrified that he could hardly reach home; and early in the morning he came and fell at his feet, asking his pardon, for he did not doubt that Cuthbert was fully acquainted with all that had taken place. To whom Cuthbert replied: 'What is the matter, my brother? What have you done? Did you follow to see what I was about to do? I forgive you for it on one condition — that you tell it to nobody before my death.'[2] In this he followed the example of the Lord, who, when he showed his glory to his disciples on the mountain, said: 'See that you tell no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead.'[3] When the brother had assented to this condition, he gave him his blessing, and released him from all his trouble. The man concealed this miracle during St. Cuthbert's life, but after his death took care to tell it to as many persons as he was able.

[1] See the similar account of Dryhthelm, p. 65.
[2] The same request is made by Chad, p. 49.
[3] Matt. 17. 9; Mark 9. 9.

### A Miracle

It happened also that on a certain day he was going forth from the monastery to preach, with one attendant only; and when they had become tired with walking, though a great part of their journey lay before them ere they could reach the village to which they were going, Cuthbert said to his follower: 'Where shall we stop to take refreshment? or do you know any one on the road to whom we may turn in?' 'I was myself thinking on the same subject,' said the boy; 'for we have brought no provisions with us, and I know no one on the road who will entertain us, and we have a long journey still before us, which we cannot well accomplish without eating.' The man of God replied: 'My son, learn to have faith, and trust in God, who will never suffer to perish with hunger those who have trust in Him.' Then looking up, and seeing an eagle flying in the air, he said: 'Do you perceive that eagle yonder? It is possible for God to feed us even by means of that eagle.' As they were thus discoursing, they came near a river, and behold, the eagle was standing on its bank.' 'Look,' said the man of God, 'there is our handmaid the eagle that I spoke to you about. Run and see what provision God has sent us, and come again and tell me.' The boy ran, and found a good-sized fish, which the eagle had just caught. But the man of God reproved him: 'What have you done, my son? Why have you not given part to God's handmaid? Cut the fish in two pieces, and give her one, as her service well deserves.' He did as he was bidden, and carried the other part with him on his journey. When the time for eating was come, they turned aside to a certain village, and, having given the fish to be cooked, made an excellent repast, and gave also to their entertainers,

whilst Cuthbert preached to them the word of God, and blessed Him for his mercies; for happy is the man whose hope is in the name of the Lord, and who has not looked upon vanity and foolish deceit. After this, they resumed their journey, to preach to those among whom they were going.

### Cuthbert's House

At his first entrance upon the solitary life, he sought out the most retired spot in the outskirts of the monastery. But when he had for some time contended with the invisible adversary with prayer and fasting in this solitude, he then, aiming at higher things, sought out a more distant field for conflict, and more remote from the eyes of men. There is a certain island called Farne in the middle of the sea, not made an island, like Lindisfarne, by the flow of the tide, which the Greeks call *rheuma*, and then restored to the mainland at its ebb, but lying off several miles to the east, and consequently surrounded on all sides by the deep and boundless ocean. No one, before God's servant Cuthbert, had ever dared to inhabit this island alone, on account of the evil spirits which reside there; but when this servant of Christ came, armed with the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, all the fiery darts of the wicked were extinguished,[1] and that wicked enemy and all his followers were put to flight.

Christ's soldier, therefore, having thus, by the expulsion of the tyrants, become the lawful monarch of the land, built a city fit for his empire, and houses therein suitable to his city. The building is almost of a round form, from wall to wall about four or five poles in extent;

[1] Cf. Eph. 6. 16, 17.

the wall on the outside is higher than a man, but within, by excavating the rock, he made it much deeper, to prevent the eyes and the thoughts from wandering, that the mind might be wholly bent on heavenly things, and the pious inhabitant might behold nothing from his residence but the heavens above him. The wall was constructed, not of hewn stones or of brick and mortar, but of rough stones and turf, which had been taken from the ground within. Some of them were so large that four men could hardly have lifted them, but Cuthbert himself, with angels helping him, had raised them up and placed them on the wall. There were two chambers in the house, one an oratory, the other for domestic purposes. He finished the walls of them by digging round and cutting away the natural soil within and without, and forming the roof out of rough poles and straw. Moreover, at the landing-place of the island he built a large house, in which the brethren who visited him there might be received and rest themselves, and not far from it there was a fountain of water for their use.

### He Tills the Fields

At first, indeed, he received from his visitors a small portion of bread, and drank water from the fountain; but afterwards he thought it more fitting to live by the labor of his own hands, like the old Fathers. He therefore asked them to bring him some instruments of husbandry, and some wheat to sow; but when he had sown the grain in the spring it did not come up. At the next visit of the monks he said to them: 'Perhaps the nature of the soil, or the will of God, does not allow wheat to grow in this place; bring me, I beg of you, some barley — possibly that may answer. If, however, on trial it does not, I had better return to the monastery than be supported here by

the labor of others.' The barley was accordingly brought and sown, although the season was extraordinarily late; and the barley came up most unexpectedly and most abundantly. It no sooner began to ripen than the birds came and wasted it most grievously. Christ's holy servant, as he himself afterwards told it (for he used in a cheerful and affable manner to confirm the faith of his hearers by telling them the mercies which his own faith had obtained from the Lord), drew near to the birds, and said to them:[1] 'Why do you touch that which you have not sown? Have you more share than I in this? If you have received license from God, do what he allows you; but if not, get you gone, and do no further injury to that which belongs to another.' He had no sooner spoken than all the flock of birds departed, and never more returned to feed upon that field.

### Cuthbert's Character

The venerable man of God, Cuthbert, adorned the office of bishop, which he had undertaken, by the exercise of many virtues, according to the precepts and examples of the apostles. For he protected the people committed to his care with frequent prayers, and invited them to heavenly things by most wholesome admonitions, and followed that system which most facilitates teaching, by first doing himself what he taught to others.[2] He saved the needy man from the hand of the stronger, and the poor and destitute from those who would oppress them. He comforted the weak and sorrowful; but he took care to recall those who were sinfully rejoicing to that sorrow

[1] St. Francis' preaching to the birds (cf. Sabatier's *Life*, p. 177) is more than five hundred years later.

[2] Cf. Chaucer, *Prologue to the Canterbury Tales* 529–530; and Goldsmith, *Deserted Village* 170.

which is according to godliness.[1] Desiring still to exercise his usual frugality, he did not cease to observe the severity of a monastic life, amid the turmoil by which he was surrounded. He gave food to the hungry, raiment to the shivering, and his course was marked by all the other particulars which adorn the life of a pontiff.

### 3. SELECTIONS FROM THE *LIFE OF BENEDICT BISCOP*[2]

*Works*, ed. Giles, 4. 358 ff.

After the interval of a year, Benedict crossed the sea into Gaul, and no sooner asked than he obtained and carried back with him some merchants to build him a church in the Roman style, which he had always admired. So much zeal did he show from his love to Saint Peter, in whose honor he was building it, that within a year from the time of laying the foundation, you might have seen the roof on, and the solemnity of the mass celebrated therein. When the work was drawing to completion, he sent messengers to Gaul to fetch makers of glass (more properly artificers), who were at this time unknown in Britain, that they might glaze the windows of his church, with the cloisters and dining-rooms. This was done, and they came, and not only finished the work required, but taught the English nation their handicraft, which was well adapted for closing the lanterns of the church, and for the vessels required for necessary uses. All other things necessary for the service of the church and the altar, the sacred vessels, and the vestments, because they could not be procured in England, he took especial care to buy and bring home from foreign parts.

[1] Cf. 2 Cor. 7. 10.

[2] Cf. p. 3.

Some decorations and muniments there were which could not be procured even in Gaul, and these the pious founder determined to fetch from Rome; for which purpose, after he had formed the rule for his monastery, he made his fourth voyage to Rome, and returned loaded with more abundant spiritual merchandise than before. In the first place, he brought back a large quantity of books of all kinds; secondly, a great number of relics of Christ's apostles and martyrs, all likely to bring a blessing on many an English church; thirdly, he introduced the Roman mode of chanting, singing, and ministering in the church, by obtaining permission from Pope Agatho to take back with him John, the archchanter of the church of St. Peter,[1] and abbot of the monastery of St. Martin, to teach the English. This John, when he arrived in England, not only communicated instruction by teaching personally, but left behind him numerous writings, which are still preserved in the library of the same monastery. In the fourth place, Benedict brought with him a thing by no means to be despised, a letter of privilege from Pope Agatho, which he had procured, not only with the consent, but by the request and exhortation of King Egfrith, and by which the monastery was rendered safe and secure for ever from foreign invasion. Fifthly, he brought with him pictures of sacred representations, to adorn the church of St. Peter, which he had built; namely, a likeness of the Virgin Mary and of the twelve apostles, with which he intended to adorn the central nave, on boarding placed from one wall to the other; also some figures from ecclesiastical history for the south wall, and others from the Revelation of St. John for the north wall; so that every one who entered the church, even if they could not read, wherever they turned their eyes, might have

[1] Cf. p. 50.

before them the amiable countenance of Christ and his saints, though it were but in a picture, and with watchful minds might revolve on the benefits of our Lord's incarnation, and, having before their eyes the perils of the Last Judgment, might examine their hearts the more strictly on that account. . . .

This man therefore undertook the government of the monastery in the ninth year after its foundation, and continued it till his death four years after. He was a man of noble birth; but he did not make that, like some men, a cause of boasting and despising others, but a motive for exercising nobility of mind also, as becomes a servant of the Lord. He was the cousin of his own abbot Benedict; and yet such was the singleness of mind in both, such was their contempt for human grandeur, that the one, on entering the monastery, did not expect any honor or relationship to be taken of him more than of others, and Benedict himself never thought of offering any; but the young man, faring like the rest, took pleasure in undergoing the usual course of monastic discipline in every respect. And indeed, though he had been an attendant on King Egfrith, and had abandoned his temporal vocation and arms, devoting himself to spiritual welfare, he remained so like the other brethren that he took pleasure in threshing and winnowing, milking the ewes and cows, and employed himself in the bakehouse, the garden, the kitchen, and in all the other labors of the monastery, with readiness and submission. When he attained to the name and dignity of abbot, he retained the same spirit, saying to all, according to the advice of a certain wise man: 'They have made thee a ruler; be not exalted, but be amongst them like one of them, gentle, affable, and kind to all.'[1] Whenever occasion

[1] Cf. Ecclus. 32. 1.

required, he punished offenders by regular discipline; but was rather careful, out of his natural habits of love, to warn them not to offend, and bring a cloud of disquietude over his cheerful countenance. Oftentimes, when he went forth on the business of the monastery, if he found the brethren working, he would join them and work with them, by taking the plow-handle, or handling the smith's hammer, or using the winnowing-machine, or anything of like nature. For he was a young man of great strength and pleasant tone of voice, of a kind and bountiful disposition, and fair to look on. He ate of the same food as the other brethren, and in the same apartment: he slept in the same common room as he did before he was abbot; so that even after he was taken ill, and foresaw clear signs of his approaching death, he still remained two days in the common dormitory of the brethren. He passed the five days immediately before his death in a private apartment, from which he came out one day, and, sitting in the open air, sent for all the brethren, and, as his kind feelings prompted him, gave to each of them the kiss of peace, whilst they all shed tears of sorrow for this the loss of their father and their guide. He died on the seventh of March, in the night, as the brethren were leaving off the matin hymn. He was twenty-four years old when he entered the monastery; he lived there twelve years, during seven of which he was in priest's orders; the others he passed in the dignity of abbot; and so, having thrown off his fleshly and perishable body, he entered the heavenly kingdom.

Now that we have this foretaste of the life of the venerable Easterwine, let us resume the thread of the narrative. When Benedict had made this man abbot of St. Peter's, and Ceolfrith abbot of St. Paul's, he not long after made his fifth voyage from Britain to Rome, and returned (as usual)

with an immense number of proper ecclesiastical relics. There were many sacred books and pictures of the saints, as numerous as before. He also brought with him pictures out of our Lord's history, which he hung round the chapel of our Lady in the larger monastery; and others to adorn St. Paul's church and monastery, ably describing the connection of the Old and New Testament;[1] as, for instance, Isaac bearing the wood for his own sacrifice, and Christ carrying the cross on which he was about to suffer, were placed side by side. Again, the serpent raised up by Moses in the desert was illustrated by the Son of Man exalted on the cross. Among other things, he brought two cloaks, all of silk, and of incomparable workmanship, for which he received an estate of three hides on the south bank of the river Wear, near its mouth, from King Aldfrith, for he found on his return that Egfrith had been murdered during his absence.

## 4. SELECTIONS FROM THE *LIFE OF CEOLFRITH*

*Works*, ed. Giles, 4. 387 ff.

The third of these, Ceolfrith, was a man of great perseverance, of acute intellect, bold in action, experienced in judgment, and zealous in religion. He first of all, as we have mentioned, with the advice and assistance of Benedict, founded, completed, and ruled the monastery of St. Paul's seven years, and afterwards ably governed during twenty-eight years both these monasteries, or, to speak more correctly, the single monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul in its two separate localities; and whatever works of merit his predecessor had begun, he with no less zeal took pains to finish. For among other arrangements which he found it

[1] A similar arrangement is often found in the windows of Gothic cathedrals; see Male, *L'Art Religieux du XIII^e Siècle en France*, pp. 189 ff.

necessary to make during his long government of the monastery, he built several oratories; increased the number of vessels of the church and altar, and the vestments of every kind; and the library of both monasteries, which Abbot Benedict had so actively begun, under his equally zealous care became doubled in extent. For he added three pandects [1] of a new translation to that of the old translation [2] which he had brought from Rome; one of them, returning to Rome in his old age, he took with him as a gift; the other two he left to the two monasteries. Moreover, for a beautiful volume of the Geographers which Benedict had bought at Rome, he received in exchange from King Aldfrith, who was well skilled in Holy Scripture, a grant of land of eight hides, near the river Fresca, for the monastery of St. Paul's. Benedict had arranged this purchase with the same King Aldfrith before his death, but died before he could complete it. . . .

But Ceolfrith, having now practised a long course of regular discipline, which the prudent Benedict had laid down for himself and his brethren on the authority of the elders, and having shown the most incomparable skill both in praying and chanting, in which he daily exercised himself, together with the most wonderful energy in punishing the wicked, and modesty in consoling the weak; having also observed such abstinence in meat and drink, and such humility in dress, as are uncommon among rulers; saw himself now old and full of days, and unfit any longer, from his extreme age, to prescribe to his brethren the proper forms of spiritual exercise by his life and doctrine. Having therefore deliberated long within himself, he judged it expedient, having first impressed on the brethren to choose

[1] Copies of the Bible.
[2] The Vulgate Bible, and the Old Latin, or Itala.

for themselves, in accordance with the statutes of their privilege and the Rule of the holy abbot Benedict,[1] a more efficient abbot out of their own number, to depart for a visit to the holy places of the blessed apostles at Rome, where he had been in his youth with the holy Benedict[2]; that not only he might for a time be free from all worldly cares before his death, and so have leisure and quiet for reflection, but that they also, having chosen a younger abbot, might naturally, in consequence thereof, observe more accurately the rules of monastic discipline.

At first all opposed, and entreated him on their knees and with many tears, but their solicitations were to no purpose. Such was his eagerness to depart that on the third day after he had disclosed his design to the brethren, he set out upon his journey. For he feared, what actually came to pass, that he might die before he reached Rome; and he was also anxious that neither his friends nor the nobility, who all honored him, should delay his departure, or give him money which he would not have time to repay; for with him it was an invariable rule, if any one made him a present, to show equal grace by returning it, either at once or within a suitable space of time. Early in the morning, therefore, of Wednesday, the fourth of June,[3] the mass was sung in the church of the blessed mother of God, the ever virgin Mary, and in the church of the apostle Peter; and those who were present communicating with him, he prepared for his departure. All of them assembled in St. Peter's church; and when he had lighted the frankincense, and addressed a prayer at the altar, he gave his blessing to all, standing on the steps, and holding a censer in his hand.

[1] Plummer understands this to mean Benedict of Monte Cassino. See p. 278.

[2] That is, Benedict Biscop. This was in 678.

[3] A.D. 716.

Amid the prayers of the litany, the cry of sorrow resounded from all as they went out of the church: they entered the oratory of St. Lawrence the martyr, which was in the dormitory of the brethren over against them. Whilst giving them his last farewell, he admonished them to preserve love towards one another, and to correct, according to the gospel rule, those who did amiss. He forgave all of them whatever wrong they might have done him; and entreated them all to pray for him, and to be reconciled to him, if he had ever reprimanded them too harshly. They went down to the shore, and there amid tears and lamentations he gave them the kiss of peace, whereupon they all knelt; and when he had offered up a prayer, he went on board the vessel with his companions. The deacons of the church went on board with him, carrying lighted tapers and a golden cross. Having traversed the river, he adored the cross, mounted his horse, and departed, leaving in both the monasteries about six hundred brethren.

When he was gone, the brethren returned to the church, and with much weeping and prayer commended themselves and theirs to the protection of the Lord. After a short interval, having ended the Psalms of terce, they again assembled, and deliberated what was to be done. At length they resolved with prayer, hymns, and fasting, to seek of the Lord a new abbot as soon as possible. This resolution they communicated to their brethren of St. Paul's, by some of that monastery who were present, and also by some of their own people. They immediately gave their consent, and both monasteries showing the same spirit, they altogether lifted up their hearts and voices to the Lord. At length, on the third day, which was Whitsunday, an assembly was held, consisting of all the brethren of St. Peter's and several of the elder monks from the monastery

of St. Paul's. The greatest concord prevailed, and the same sentiments were expressed by both. They elected for their new abbot Hwætbert, who from his boyhood had not only been bred up in the regular discipline of the monastery, but had acquired much experience in the various duties of writing, chanting, reading, and teaching. He had been at Rome in the time of Pope Sergius, of blessed memory, and had there learnt and copied every thing which he thought useful or worthy to be brought away. He had also been twelve years in priest's orders. He was now made abbot, and immediately went with some of the brethren to Ceolfrith, who was waiting for a ship in which to cross the ocean. They told him what they had done, for which he gave thanks to God in approbation of their choice, and received from his successor a letter of recommendation to Pope Gregory.[1] . . .

But Christ's servant Ceolfrith, as has been said, died on his way to the threshold of the holy apostles, of old age and weakness. For he reached the Lingones[2] about nine o'clock, where he died seven hours after, and was honorably buried the next day in the church of the three twin martyrs, much to the sorrow, not only of the English who were in his train, to the number of eighty, but also of the neighboring inhabitants, who were dissolved in tears at the loss of the reverend father. For it was almost impossible to avoid weeping to see part of his company continuing their journey without the holy father, whilst others, abandoning their first intentions, returned home to relate his death and burial; and others, again, lingered in sorrow at the tomb of the deceased, among strangers speaking an unknown tongue.

[1] A copy of the letter is given.

[2] Langres, southeast of Paris, and nearly north of Dijon.

Ceolfrith was seventy-four years old when he died: forty-seven years he had been in priest's orders, during thirty-five of which he had been abbot; or, to speak more correctly, forty-three — for from the time when Benedict began to build his monastery in honor of the holiest of the apostles, Ceolfrith had been his only companion, coadjutor, and teacher of the monastic rules. He never relaxed the rigor of ancient discipline from any occasions of old age, illness, or travel; for, from the day of his departure till the day of his death, i.e. from the fourth of June until the twenty-fifth of September, a space of one hundred and fourteen days, besides the canonical hours of prayer, he never omitted to go twice daily through the Psalter in order; and even when he became so weak that he could not ride on horseback, and was obliged to be carried in a horse-litter, the holy ceremony of the mass was offered up every day, except one which he passed at sea, and the three days immediately before his death.

## 5. BEDE'S LETTER TO EGBERT, ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

This letter was among the last of Bede's writings. Its date is Nov. 5, 734, only a few months before Bede's death, if the traditional date, 735, be accepted. Egbert, who was to rule the church of the North for thirty-two years after this letter was written, was the brother of King Eadbert of Northumbria; he has been called 'learned, just, gracious, and liberal.' See p. 260, and the life in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*.

And because your diocese is too extensive for you alone to go through it, and preach the word of God in every village and hamlet, even should you give a whole year to it, it is necessary that you appoint others to assist you

in the holy work, by ordaining priests and nominating teachers who may be zealous in preaching the word of God in every village, and celebrating the holy sacraments, and especially by performing the sacred rites of baptism wherever opportunity may offer. And in sending forth such preaching to the people, I consider it above every other thing important that you should endeavor to implant deeply in the memory of every one in your see the Catholic faith which is contained in the Apostles' Creed, and in the Lord's Prayer as it is taught us in the holy gospel. And, indeed, there is no doubt that those who have studied the Latin language will be found to know these well; but the unlearned, that is, those who know only their own language, must be made to learn them, and repeat them over and over again, in their own tongue. This must be done not only in the case of laymen, who are still in the life of the world, but also in that of the clergy or monks who are without a knowledge of the Latin tongue. For thus every congregation of the faithful will learn in what manner they ought to show their faith, and with what steadfastness of belief they should arm and fortify themselves against the assaults of unclean spirits; and thus every band of those who pray to God will learn what they ought especially to ask for from the divine mercy. Wherefore also I have myself often given English translations[1] of both these, namely, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, to uneducated priests. For the holy prelate Ambrose also, speaking of faith,[2] gives this admonition, that all the faithful should repeat the words of the Creed every morning early, and so fortify themselves as by a spiritual antidote against the poison which the

[1] Unfortunately, these translations of Bede's no longer exist.
[2] *De Virg.* 3. 4. 20.

malignant cunning of the devil may, either by night or by day, cast out against them. And that the Lord's Prayer should be frequently repeated is taught us by the habit of supplication on our knees. . . .

But others, who are laymen, and have no experience of the regular monastic life, nor any love for the same, commit a still greater scandal [than the acceptance of estates by the authorities of unworthy monasteries]; for they give money to the kings, and, under pretense of erecting monasteries, they acquire possessions wherein the more freely to indulge their licentiousness; and, procuring these by a royal edict to be assigned over to them in inheritance, they get the deed by which these privileges are confirmed, as if it were a matter worthy of God's notice, authenticated by the signatures of the bishops, abbots, and secular authorities. And thus, having gained possession of farms and villages, they free themselves from every bond, both human and divine,[1] and in the character of superiors over monks, though they are but laymen, they do nothing therein but gratify their desires. Nay, it is not monks that are there assembled, but all such as they can pick up — outcasts from other monasteries for disobedience, or men whom they can allure away from other monasteries, or, in short, such of their own followers as they can persuade to receive the tonsure, and promise

[1] Earlier in the letter Bede speaks of their luxury, vanity, and intemperance in meat and drink. Accordingly, he would have an episcopal see established at some monastery, to which a monk, or some one acceptable to the monks, should be elected. The wicked monasteries should then be brought under the authority of this bishop, since, as Bede said, 'there are many such large establishments which, as is commonly said, are of use neither to God nor man, because they neither observe regular monastic life nor yet supply soldiers and followers of the secular powers to defend our province from the barbarians.' The breadth of view here manifested is remarkable. If Bede's advice had been followed, the spoliation under Henry VIII might have been lessened, if not averted.

monastic obedience to themselves. With such ill-sorted societies do they fill the cells which they have built, whilst they present a disgraceful spectacle never before heard of; for at one time they are occupied with their wives and the care of raising children, and at another time they rise from their beds to occupy themselves with the internal affairs of the monastery. Furthermore, they display the same impudence in procuring land for their wives, to erect convents, as they say; and these, equally foolish, since they also are laics, suffer themselves to become the superiors over Christ's handmaidens. Well suited to them is the proverb that wasps, though they can make combs, yet store them with poison instead of honey. Thus for about thirty years, ever since King Aldfrith was removed from this life,[1] our province has been involved in such folly and error.

J. A. Giles, slightly revised

## CUTHBERT'S LETTER ON THE DEATH OF BEDE

This letter to a friend in a distant monastery was written by Cuthbert, a pupil of Bede's, who afterwards became Abbot of Jarrow. The various texts are not always in agreement in matters of minor detail. The present version is based on Plummer's text in his edition of Bede, 1. clx ff., itself taken from Mayor and Lumby's reproduction (see p. 4) of the ninth-century manuscript at St. Gallen. We have no record of the fulfilment of the promise at the close of the letter.

To his fellow-lector Cuthwin, beloved in Christ, Cuthbert, his co-disciple, health for ever in God! I received the little present you sent me with much pleasure, and have read with great satisfaction your devout and learned letter,

[1] A.D. 705.

in which I found what I so much desired — that you are diligently celebrating masses and holy prayers for our father and master, Bede, beloved of God. And so — rather out of love for him than relying on any capacity in myself — it is pleasing to relate in a few words the manner in which he departed this world, inasmuch as I understand that this is what you wish and request. For about a fortnight preceding the day of our Lord's resurrection he was afflicted with feebleness, and especially with shortness of breath, though he had no pain of any account. And so he lived on until our Lord's ascension — the seventh of the Kalends of June[1] — cheerful and rejoicing, returning thanks to God Almighty every day and every night — nay, every hour. He taught lessons every day to us his pupils, and the rest of the time he busied himself, to the extent of his abilities, in singing psalms. He also passed the whole night cheerfully in prayer and thanksgiving to God, save only when a little sleep prevented; but he no sooner awoke than he would presently muse in his customary way upon the melodies of Scripture; nor did he forget with uplifted hands to return thanks to God. I declare with truth that I have never seen with my eyes, nor heard with my ears, any one so diligent in giving thanks to the living God.

O truly blessed man! He would recite the words of St. Paul the Apostle, 'It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,'[2] and much more out of Holy Writ, in which he would exhort us to shake off the sleep of the soul, and to think upon our last hour. And he spoke in our tongue also concerning the dread

[1] May 26. The reading and the date are uncertain; Plummer accepts the traditional year, 735.

[2] Heb. 10. 31.

departure of the soul from the body — for he was skilled in our songs:[1]

> Before the dread journey which needs must be taken
> No man is more mindful than meet is and right
> To ponder, ere hence he departs, what his spirit
> Shall, after the death-day, receive as its portion
> Of good or of evil, by mandate of doom.

He would also sing antiphons, to console us and himself, one of which is: 'O King of glory, Lord of hosts, who didst this day ascend triumphant above all heavens, we beseech Thee leave us not orphans, but send down upon us the Spirit of truth, even the Promise of the Father. Alleluia.'[2] When he came to the words, 'leave us not orphans,' he burst into tears, and wept much. And after a time he began and repeated again what he had commenced. Thus would he do all day long, and we who listened wept and lamented with him. At times we read, at times we mourned — nay rather we wept as we read. In such happiness we passed the quinquagesimal period[3] until the aforesaid day; and he joyed greatly, returning thanks to God that he was deemed worthy to suffer such affliction. He would often repeat, 'God scourgeth every son whom He receiveth,'[4] and a saying of Ambrose's, 'I have not lived in such wise as to be ashamed to live among you; neither do I fear to die, for we have a gracious Lord.'[5]

[1] That is, in the vernacular poetry, such as that of Cædmon, no doubt. The original Old English text follows, with a Latin translation. The rendering given above is from our *Select Translations from Old English Poetry*, p. 78.

[2] The antiphon for the Second Vespers of Ascension Day. See Ps. 24. 10; 68. 4, 5, 33; John 14. 17, 18; Acts 1. 4; 2. 33.

[3] That between Easter and Pentecost.

[4] Heb. 12. 6.

[5] Paulinus, *Life of Ambrose*, chap. 46.

During those days, in addition to the lessons we had from him daily and his singing of the Psalms, he labored upon two works worthy of remembrance: he translated into our own tongue, for the profit of the Church of God, the gospel of St. John from the beginning to the point where it reads, 'But what are they among so many?'[1] and certain selections from the works of Bishop Isidore, saying: 'I would not have my boys read a falsehood, and labor herein without profit after my death.'

But when the Tuesday before our Lord's ascension came, his breathing grew much more difficult, and a slight swelling appeared in his feet. But he taught and dictated cheerfully all that day, and now and again he would say, among other things: 'Learn quickly, for I know not how long I shall hold out, or whether my Creator will take me ere long.' It seemed to us, however, as though he knew quite well the time of his departure. And thus he passed the night, awake, in thanksgiving. And when morning dawned — that is, Wednesday — he instructed us to write with all speed on the work which we had begun, and we did so until the third hour. But from the third hour we walked in procession with the relics of the saints, as the custom of that day demanded.[2] One of us remained with him, who said to him: 'There is still one chapter wanting to the book you have dictated; it seems hard however to be asking more questions of you.' But he replied: 'No, it is easy. Take your pen, and make ready, and write with haste.' And he did so. At the ninth hour, he said to me: 'I have a few articles of value in my casket — pepper, napkins, and incense. Run quickly and call the priests of our monastery to me, that I may distribute among them such little gifts as God has bestowed on me.' And I did so

[1] John 6. 9.

[2] See *Dict. Chr. Antiq.* s.v. Rogations.

with trepidation. He addressed one and all there present, admonishing them and entreating them earnestly to say prayers and masses for him — which they freely promised. But all kept weeping and lamenting, especially because he said that they must not think to see his face much longer in this world;[1] but they rejoiced in that he said: 'It is time, if it be the will of my Maker, for me to be released from the body, and go unto Him who formed me out of nothing, when as yet I was not. I have lived long, and my merciful Judge has well ordered my life. The time of my departure is at hand,[2] for my soul desires to see my King, even Christ in His beauty.'[3] This and much else he said for our edification, and passed his last day joyfully until evening. And the boy named Wilbert, mentioned above, said again: 'Dear master, there is yet one sentence unwritten.' 'Very well,' said he, 'write.' And shortly the boy said: 'It is done now.' 'You have spoken very truly,' said he; 'it is finished.[4] Take my head in your hands, for it is highly pleasing to me to sit facing my holy place where I was wont to pray, so that I may sit and call upon my Father.' And thus upon the floor of his little cell, chanting 'Gloria Patri et Filio et Spiritui Sancto,' and the rest, he breathed his last.

And we must believe without doubt, inasmuch as he had here labored continuously for the praise of God, that angels bore his soul to the longed-for joys of heaven. And all who witnessed the death of our father Bede declared that they had never beheld any other expire with such devotion and tranquillity, for, as you have heard, so long as his soul continued in his body he chanted the 'Gloria Patri' and other songs to the glory of the Lord,

[1] Cf. Acts 20. 37, 38.
[2] Cf. 2 Tim. 4. 6.
[3] Cf. Isa. 33. 17.
[4] Cf. John 19. 30.

and with uplifted hands ceased not to return thanks to God. You must know that much could be told and written about him, but my lack of learning in this tongue shortens my account; nevertheless I purpose, with God's assistance, to write more fully of him at my leisure, and tell what I saw with my eyes and heard with my ears.

CHAUNCEY B. TINKER

## SELECTIONS FROM THE LETTERS OF ALCUIN

Alcuin, who was Charlemagne's great superintendent of education, represents the influence of England in the restoration of learning on the Continent during the 'earlier Renaissance.' Born at York in 735, he received his education in the cathedral school founded by Egbert, Bede's pupil (cf. p. 4), which is called by West 'the best school of Western Christendom.' He later became master of this school, in which post he continued until the fame of his learning attracted the notice of Charlemagne. At the invitation of the great king, he settled on the Continent in 782, where for fourteen years he served as master of the palace school at Aix-la-Chapelle. Charles himself became one of his pupils. The following anecdote is characteristic: 'On one occasion when he [Charles] had been informed of the great learning of Augustine and Jerome, he impatiently demanded of Alcuin, "Why can I not have twelve clerks such as these?". . . Alcuin was shocked. "What," he discreetly rejoined, "the Lord of heaven and earth had but two such, and wouldst thou have twelve?"' (West's *Alcuin*, p. 46).

One of the chief services of Alcuin to the Church, as well as to Charlemagne, was in combating two Eastern heresies — Adoptionism and image-worship; it was largely through Alcuin's influence that they were denounced at the Council of Frankfort (794). Two years after this, Alcuin retired from his educational work at court, and was made Abbot of Tours. Here he instituted the strict Benedictine discipline, and eagerly continued his schemes of ecclesiastical education (cf. p. 272). He died at Tours in 804.

The best biographies of Alcuin in English are Gaskoin's (which contains a bibliography), London, 1904, and Stubbs', in the *Dictionary of Christian Biography*. For the relation of Alcuin to earlier mediæval and to later education see Mullinger's interesting *Schools of Charles the Great* (London, 1877).

Alcuin regarded all learning as his province, and taught such diverse subjects as rhetoric and astronomy. His works are therefore very various, comprising commentaries on Scripture, theology, orthography, grammar, poetry, and history. The only complete edition of them is in Migne's *Patrologia* 100 and 101. Our translation is from the more critical, but unfortunately incomplete, *Monumenta Alcuiniana* of Wattenbach and Duemmler (Berlin, 1873).

## 1. TO THE MONKS OF WEARMOUTH AND JARROW

*Ep.* 27, written 793, after June 8, with reference to the invasion of the Northmen. This was only six years after their first recorded inroad.

Let the Rule of St. Benedict[1] be frequently read in the assembly of the brethren, and explained in your own tongue, so that it may be understood by every one; by whose ordinance let every one amend his life, that you may keep inviolably what you vowed to God before the altar, according to the words of the prophet, 'Vow, and pay unto the Lord your God,'[2] for God hath no pleasure in an unfaithful promise.[3]

Consider whom you have as a defender against the heathen who have appeared about the bounds of your maritime abode. Put not your trust in arms, but in God, who never deserts those who trust in Him. Place not your confidence in the flight of the flesh, but in the prayer of your fathers; you shall be indeed their children, if you give diligence to follow in their footsteps. The holiness of a place is of no advantage to those who do evil, but the

[1] See pp. 278 ff. [2] Ps. 76. 11. [3] Cf. Eccl. 5. 4.

integrity of religion converts those who do well into saints, and makes them worthy of the divine protection. Who is not afraid of the terror which has befallen in the church of St. Cuthbert? Therefore amend your conduct, lest even the righteous perish because of the sins of the profligate, lest the vineyard of the Lord be given over to be gnawed by the teeth of foxes, lest the feet of the heathen pass through the sanctuaries of God. This would seem impious, but how much worse were it if the rage of the devil should lay waste the inmost parts of our hearts on account of our vices. Enemies from without derive their power from the enemies within. If God, because of our good and chaste mode of life, dwells within our hearts, he will never allow His enemies to ravage what is His.[1] How great a multitude of the Assyrian army perished because of a single prayer of a righteous king, who was dear to God![2] Let the chastening of others be a warning to you, and let the tribulation of a few be the salvation of many.

You inhabit the seashore, when the plague first made its descent. In us is fulfilled what was predicted aforetime by the prophet: 'Out of the north evil shall break forth,'[3] and, 'From the Lord terrible praise shall come.'[4] Behold, the flying robber has overrun the northern parts of our island. We lament because our brethren have suffered. Let us take heed lest the like happen to us. 'Let us come before the face of the Lord with confession, and let us cry aloud before the Lord our Maker,'[5] that He, who is Creator and Redeemer, may also be Protector and Ruler, and, in return for good deserts and purity of religion, may defend His flock with the right arm of His power.

[1] Cf. *Mon. Alc.*, p. 373.
[2] 2 Kings 19. 14 ff., 35; Isa. 37. 14 ff., 36.
[3] Jer. 1. 14.
[4] Job 37. 22 (Vulgate inexactly quoted).
[5] Ps. 95. 2, 6 (adapted).

Remember what noble fathers you have had, and be not degenerate sons of such ancestors. Behold the treasures of books;[1] contemplate the comeliness of the churches, the beauty of the buildings. Call to mind the order of the disciplined life. How blessed is he who passes from these fair habitations to the joys of the heavenly kingdom!

Let the youth accustom themselves to attend the praises of the celestial King, not to dig out the holes of foxes, nor to follow the coursings and doublings of hares. How impious it is to neglect the service of Christ, and to follow the trail of foxes! Let the youth learn the sacred Scriptures, that when they arrive at perfect age, they may teach others in their turn. He who will not learn when he is young

[1] Alcuin celebrates the library at York, which he well knew, in the famous lines (*De Sanctis Eboracensis Ecclesiæ* 1535–61):

Illic invenies veterum vestigia patrum,
Quidquid habet pro se Latio Romanus in orbe,
Græcia vel quidquid transmisit clara Latinis,
Hebraicus vel quod populus bibit imbre superno,
Africa lucifluo vel quidquid lumine sparsit.
Quod pater Hieronymus, quod sensit Hilarius atque
Ambrosius præsul, simel Augustinus, et ipse
Sanctus Athanasius, quod Orosius edit avitus:
Quidquid Gregorius summus docet et Leo papa;
Basilius quidquid, Fulgentius atque coruscant.
Cassiodorus item, Chrysostomus atque Johannes.
Quidquid et Althelmus docuit, quid Beda magister,
Quæ Victorinus scripsere Boetius atque,
Historici veteres, Pompeius, Plinius, ipse
Acer Aristoteles, rhetor quoque Tullius ingens.
Quid quoque Sedulius, vel quid canit ipse Juvencus,
Alcimus et Clemens, Prosper, Paulinus, Arator,
Quid Fortunatus, vel quid Lactantius edunt.
Quæ Maro Virgilius, Statius, Lucanus et auctor,
Artis grammaticæ vel quid scripsere magistri;
Quid Probus atque Focas, Donatus Priscianusve,
Servius, Euticius, Pompeius, Comminianus.
Invenies alios perplures, lector, ibidem
Egregios studiis, arte et sermone magistros,
Plurima qui claro scripsere volumina sensu;
Nomina sed quorum præsenti in carmine scribi
Longius est visum, quam plectra postulet usus.

See the translation in West's *Alcuin*, pp. 34, 35.

shall not teach when he is old. Reflect upon Bede[1] the priest, the noblest teacher of our time — what zeal he had in the teaching of youth, and what praise he now has among men, not to speak of the vastly greater glory of his reward with God. By his example rouse up your sleeping minds. . . .

To you, as sons of God, pertain nobility of conduct, holiness of life, and modesty of apparel. 'A man's attire, and excessive laughter, and gait,' according to Solomon,[2] 'show what he is.' What is esteemed to be a credit to a layman — a regard for his clothes — is recognized to be a reproach to a person in orders, and especially to a monk. The prince of the apostles prohibited even to women costly garments and curled locks.[3] If this had not been a sin, says Pope Gregory,[4] the shepherd of the Church would never have denied luxurious apparel to women.

## 2. TO ÆTHELHEARD, ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY

*Ep.* 28, written 793, after June 8, with reference to the invasion of the Northmen

You are, according to the witness of the Truth, the light of all Britain, the salt of the earth, a city set upon a hill, a candle put upon a stand.[5] The blessed prince of the apostles likewise attests: 'Ye are an elect race, a royal

[1] Alcuin always mentions Bede with respect. It is he who tells (*Ep.* 274) this pretty story, writing to the monks of Wearmouth: 'Our master and your patron, the blessed Bede, is reported to have said: "I know that angels frequent the canonical hours and the assemblies of the brethren. What if they do not find me there among the brethren? Will they not be obliged to say, 'Where is Bede? Why does he not come to the prescribed prayers with the brethren?'"' If we consider the frequency of these devotions, and the multiplicity of Bede's labors, we shall better appreciate the significance of this anecdote.

[2] Ecclus. 19. 30 (Vulgate 27, modified).

[3] Cf. 1 Pet. 3. 3.

[4] *Hom. in Evang.* 1. 6.

[5] Cf. Matt. 5. 13–15.

priesthood.'[1] Through the urgency of your preaching we shall become what the same epistle goes on to describe, 'A holy nation, a people for God's own possession,' in so far as through you there is made known the power of Him who called us all 'out of darkness into His marvelous light; who in time past were no people, but now are the people of God.'[2]

Our forefathers, by the dispensation of God, though heathen, were the first to possess themselves, by their martial valor, of this country. How great a shame is it then that we should lose as Christians what they gained as heathens! This I say because of the scourge which has lately fallen upon parts of our island, after having been inhabited by our ancestors for nearly three hundred and fifty years. We read in Gildas,[3] the wisest of the Britons, that they lost their country because of the rapine and greed of their chiefs, because of the iniquity and injustice of their judges, because of the indolence and sloth displayed by their bishops in regard to preaching, and because of the luxury and evil conduct of the people. Beware lest these same vices should root themselves in our times.

### 3. FROM THE SO-CALLED *CAROLINE BOOKS*

The Second Nicene Council was convoked by the Empress Irene in 787, and pronounced, or was understood by much of Western Christendom to pronounce, in favor of image-worship. This decree was repudiated by the Council of Frankfort in 794. A contemporary chronicle asserts that Alcuin, at the request of Charlemagne, was admitted a member of this Council. In 792, according to Simeon of Durham, Charlemagne sent the Acts of the Nicene Council to England for examination, and Alcuin undertook to refute them, returning his refutation, with the Acts, to

[1] 1 Pet. 2. 9. [2] 1 Pet. 2. 10.

[3] *Mon. Hist. Brit.* 1. 16 ff.; cf. p. 274, below.

Charlemagne. Accordingly, some of the best scholars have attributed the *Caroline Books*, which contain an argument against the decisions of the Nicene Council, to Alcuin, and the most critical editors of Alcuin's letters have included an extract from the work in their edition (*Mon. Alc.*, pp. 220–242) as *Ep.* 31. For their reasons, see the work cited, p. 220, and compare Hefele, *Conciliengeschichte* 3. 651–673. For the relation of the iconoclastic controversy to cross-worship in England, see Cook's edition of *The Dream of the Rood*, p. lvii ; Stevens, *The Cross in the Literature of the Anglo-Saxons*, pp. 96, 97.

The passage which follows is from *Libri Carolini* 2. 28.

How far the mystery of the Lord's cross differs from the images with which they strive to compare it! It is worth while briefly to set forth by how many prerogatives of excellence, by how many insignia of power, the mystery of the Lord's cross surpasses those manufactured images which they heedlessly endeavor to place on an equality with it, though it can not be fully developed in our tribute of praise. It was by this standard, and not by images, that the ancient foe was defeated ; it was by these arms, and not by the smearings of pigments, that the devil was overthrown ; by this, and not by pictures, the strongholds of hell were robbed of their inhabitants;[1] by this, not by those, was mankind redeemed. From the cross, and not from images, hung the Ransom of the world. It was this, and not any image whatsoever, that was the minister of that punishment appropriated to slaves ; this it is, and not a picture, which is the ensign of our King, toward which the legions of our host continually look ; this, and not a combination of colors, is the banner of our Emperor, which our cohorts follow into battle. In a word, it is no material image, but the mystery of our Lord's cross, which is the standard that we must follow on our battle-field, in order

[1] Cf. *The Harrowing of Hell*, p. 224.

that we may fight the more valiantly; the arms with which we shall be able to maintain our liberty; the rampart which shall protect us from the inroads of the pursuing foe.[1]

## 4. TO THE MONKS AT YORK

*Ep.* 34, written about 795.

O fathers and brethren beloved beyond all others, do not forget me. I shall be yours, as in life so in death, and perhaps God will be so merciful to me that, as you have nurtured my childhood, you will entomb my old age. And if another place shall be assigned to my body, yet to my soul — whatever place it may inherit — to my soul there shall be granted, as I trust, by your holy intercessions and the mercy of God, a rest together with you, since — as our young man Seneca[2] reports that he saw — we believe that the souls of our brotherhood are assembled in one and the same place of joy. And although the diversity of merit may cause one or another to rejoice with a fuller measure of bliss, may the equality of eternity make us all live in happiness! For just as one sun shines upon all, though it is not equally seen by all because of the varying distance of the eye, so everlasting bliss shall be bestowed upon all the righteous in the kingdom of God, though the height of merit shall crown some with a greater glory.[3]

[1] In a letter to the Abbess Gisela, sister of Charlemagne, written in September, 798, Alcuin says: 'The cross which you sent me pleases me greatly.' Stevens says (*op. cit.*, p. 25): 'It is written in the life of Alcuin that whenever he saw the cross he bowed towards it, whispering these words: "Tuam crucem adoramus, Domine, et tuam gloriosam recolimus passionem."' Ceolfrith (cf. p. 250), when about to start on a journey, according to Bede, 'adorat crucem,' or, as an older life has it, 'adorat ad crucem.'

[2] For his vision, see Alcuin's *De Sanctis Eboracensis Ecclesiæ* 600 ff.

[3] See Dante's *Paradiso*, especially 1. 103 ff.; 3. 55–84, 97–8; 6. 118 ff.

## 5. TO ARNO, BISHOP OF SALZBURG

*Ep.* 71, written 796, after August 10. How the Huns should be taught the truths of Christianity.

Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded his disciples, saying:[1] 'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.' In these few words he revealed the manner of all holy preaching. He uses the word *teach* twice, and the word *baptize* once. First of all he commanded to teach the Catholic faith, and then, after that had been accepted, to baptize in the name of the holy Trinity; and finally, to indoctrinate with the precepts of the gospel those who were now imbued with faith and cleansed by holy baptism. . . . Hence it was that the wretched race of the Saxons in so many cases lost the sacrament of baptism, because they had never had the foundation of faith in their hearts. Moreover, we are to know that faith, according to St. Augustine,[2] is of the will, and not of constraint. How can a man be forced to believe what he doesn't believe? He can be forced to baptism, but not to faith. . . . A man endowed with a reasonable mind is therefore to be instructed, and to be attracted by preaching of divers sorts to acknowledge the truth of our holy faith. But above everything else, the mercy of Almighty God is to be besought for him; for the tongue of the teacher is of no avail unless divine grace imbues the heart of the listener. The Truth Himself has said:[3] 'No man can come to me except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him.' And in order that we may understand that the holy Trinity is operative equally in the

[1] Matt. 28. 19, 20. [2] *Ep.* 217. [3] John 6. 44.

salvation of men, the Lord Himself says in another place:[1] 'No man cometh unto the Father but by me.' Likewise of the Holy Ghost he says:[2] 'Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he can not enter into the kingdom of God.' So that which the priest effects visibly on the body by means of water, the Holy Spirit effects invisibly in the soul through faith. . . .

There are some infirmities which are better remedied by sweet medicines than by bitter, while certain others are better treated by bitter draughts than by sweet. Hence the teacher of God's people, while he must shine in the house of God with the lamps of all the virtues, yet must prevail most of all by an insight and discretion which shall enable him to know what pertains to each person, sex, age, undertaking, and even occasion. All these things the blessed Gregory, the celebrated teacher, has discussed most thoroughly in his *Pastoral Care*,[3] discriminating between persons, confirming by illustrations, and corroborating the whole by the authority of the divine Scriptures. To this book, O holy bishop, I refer you, begging you to have it frequently in your hands, and to keep it in your heart.

## 6. TO EANBALD II, ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

*Ep.* 72, written 796, after August 10

Let not the world's pomp elate you, nor luxurious food enfeeble you, nor vanity of raiment effeminate you, nor tongues of flatterers beguile you, nor hostility of slanderers disturb you. Let not sad things break you down, nor glad things puff you up. Be not a reed shaken with the wind,[4] nor a flower bowed with the breath of the tempest; be

[1] John 14. 6.
[2] John 3. 5.
[3] See pp. 100 ff.
[4] Cf. Matt. 11. 7; Lk. 7. 24.

neither a ruined wall nor a house built upon the sand;[1] but be a temple of the living God, founded on the solid rock, and dwelt in by the Spirit himself, the Comforter. . . .

To those of the better sort show yourself meek and lowly, but hard and unyielding to the proud, being made all things to all men, that you may gain all.[2] In your hand you have honey and wormwood; let him who will, eat of either. Let him who wishes to be fed with pious preaching taste the honey, but let him who needs severe rebuke drink of the wormwood, yet in such manner that he may hope for the honey of pardon, if so be that roseate confusion be the forerunner of penitence.

Let everything that you do be done decently and in order.[3] Have times set apart for reading; let prayer have its stated hours, and the solemnities of the mass take place at due seasons. . . . Every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God.[4] Aaron stood with the censer of his office between the living and the dead,[5] that the wrath of God might no longer burn among the people. So the priest of God's word must be both the preacher of His will to the people and the intercessor to God for the people, and so, as it were, a mediator between God and men.[6] . . .

Regard yourself not as a lord of the world, but as a steward. Let not the number of your kinsmen make you greedy of gain, as though you had to heap up for their future inheritance; you will never lack a pretext for heaping up, if once the love of money, which is the root of all evil,[7] sets your touchwood on fire. Christ is the best of proprietors; no one will make a better guardian of your

[1] Cf. Matt. 7. 26.
[2] Cf. 1 Cor. 9. 22.
[3] 1 Cor. 14. 40.
[4] Cf. Heb. 5. 1.
[5] Cf. Num. 16. 48.
[6] Cf. 1 Tim. 2. 5.
[7] Cf. 1 Tim. 6. 10.

treasure. The hand of the poor is the storehouse of Christ. Whatever of your choice things you decide to entrust to Him, send by the hand of the wretched. Let your alms be twofold — in saving the souls of the needy, and in ministering to their bodies. . . . 'The Lord loveth a cheerful giver.'[1] . . .

Let your consecrated prudence provide teachers for the youth and for the clergy. Let each group have its own separate place — one for those who read, one for those who sing, and another for those who write. Each of these groups should have its own chief, lest, growing idle, they wander about, or play silly games, or give themselves up to some other form of folly. Let your foresight, beloved son, consider all these things, so that in the chief seat of our nation there may be found a well-spring of all goodness and learning, and the thirsty traveler or the lover of churchly discipline may be able to draw therefrom whatever his soul desires.

## 7. TO CHARLEMAGNE

*Ep.* 78, written end of 796 or beginning of 797

Not only ought I, the least of the servants of our Saviour, to rejoice at the prosperity and eminence of your glorious power, but all the holy Church of God should with one consent of love offer thanks to the Lord God Almighty, who of His grace has granted to the people of Christ, in these last and perilous times of the world, so pious, prudent, and righteous a ruler and defender, zealous with all assiduity to reform what is amiss, to strengthen what is right, and to exalt what is holy, rejoicing to publish the name of the Lord God most high through many regions

[1] 2 Cor. 9. 7.

of the world, and endeavoring to kindle the light of the Catholic faith in the utmost parts. . . .

I, your Flaccus,[1] in accordance with your exhortation and will, do my utmost in the buildings of St. Martin's[2] to provide some with the honey of Holy Scripture, to intoxicate others with the old wine of ancient studies, to feed others with the apples of grammatical subtlety, and to enlighten still others with the marshaling of the stars — which suggests the work of a painter who seeks to beautify for some patron the vaulting of an edifice.[3] Thus I am made many things to many men,[4] that I may train up many to the advancement of the holy Church of God and to the adornment of your imperial reign, lest the grace of Almighty God bestowed upon me,[5] and the bounty of your goodness, be in vain. In some measure, however, I, your servant, lack the choicer books of scholarly erudition which I had in my own country through the devoted industry of my teacher,[6] and even by my own slighter exertions. I say these things to your Excellency to the end that, if perchance it should please your intent, so desirous of all wisdom, I may be permitted to send over some of our young men to obtain everything we need, and bring back into France the flowers of Britain. In this way not only will York be a garden enclosed, but Tours will have its outflowings of Paradise and its pleasant fruits, so that the south wind may come and blow upon the gardens of the Loire, and the spices thereof may flow out.[7] . . .

[1] The members of the inner circle of Charlemagne's court called one another by names supposed to characterize their qualities; thus Charlemagne was David, etc. See West, *Alcuin*, p. 44.

[2] At Tours.

[3] Probably the apse of a church.

[4] Cf. note 2, p. 270.

[5] 1 Cor. 15. 10.

[6] Albert, Archbishop of York from 767 to 778. For some of these books, see p. 263, above.

[7] Cf. Song of Sol. 4. 12, 13, 16.

As far as my moderate abilities will permit, I will not be slothful in sowing the seeds of wisdom among your servants [1] in these parts, being mindful of the sentence: [2] 'In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thy hand, for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good.' In the morning, when my studies, because of my time of life, were flourishing, I sowed in Britain; now, as my blood grows chill in the evening of my days, I cease not to sow in France, hoping that both, by the grace of God, may spring up.

## 8. TO CŒNWULF, KING OF MERCIA

*Ep.* 80, written 797

Let the words of God be read at priestly banquets. There it is fitting to listen to a reader, not to a harper; to the discourses of the Fathers, not the songs of the heathen. What concord hath Ingeld [3] with Christ? [4] The house is too narrow to hold both. The King of heaven desires not to hold communion with heathens and lost souls — so-called kings though they be; the King eternal rules in the heavens, while such a lost heathen laments in hell. Hear in your halls the voices of those that read, not in the market-places the crowd of those that laugh.

## 9. TO THE PEOPLE OF CANTERBURY

*Ep.* 86, written 797

Let the nobles of the nation rule their lordships with the help of their councils, and preside over the people

[1] The brethren of St. Martin's.
[2] Eccl. 11. 6.
[3] A king celebrated in songs; see *Zeitschrift für Deutsches Alterthum* 15. 314.
[4] Cf. 2 Cor. 6. 15.

with justice, in their decisions loving the laws of their ancestors rather than money, which subverts the words of the righteous; and let them perform manfully, with one consent, what shall be for your benefit. Place over yourselves rulers famous for their nobleness, pious with the dignity of character, honorable with the beauty of righteousness, so that the divine mercy may vouchsafe to govern, preserve, and exalt your race.

A great danger threatens this island and the people living in it. A heathen people — and this was never known before — has accustomed itself to ravage our coasts with piratical depredations. Yet the peoples of England, her kingdoms and her kings, are at variance with one another. Hardly one of the ancient stock of our kings is left — I say it with tears — and the more uncertain their lineage the less is their courage.[1] In like manner, the teachers of truth have perished throughout the churches of Christ. Almost every one follows the vanities of the world, and hates regular discipline, even the soldiers caring more for greed than for righteousness. Read Gildas, the wisest of the Britons,[2] and you will see from what causes the ancestors of the Britons lost their kingdom and country; then if you will consider yourselves, you will find almost the same things there.

Fear for yourselves the declaration of the Truth Himself:[3] 'If a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom can not stand.' See what division there is among the peoples and races of England. They are lacking in themselves because they do not keep peace and faith with one another.

Call back to yourselves, if you can make up your minds to it, your bishop Æthelheard, a wise and venerable man; and according to his counsel improve the condition of your kingdom, and amend in conduct what is displeasing to God.

[1] Cf. *Mon. Alc.*, p. 373. [2] Cf. p. 265. [3] Mark 3. 24.

## 10. TO THE MONKS OF SALZBURG

*Ep.* 90, written 795–7

O how happy is the life of the monk — acceptable to God, lovely in the sight of angels, honorable before men! He who lives it faithfully among men will without doubt reign joyously among the angels. It was initiated by the primitive church in Judea, acting through the apostles, for they, we are told, had all things common, neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own.[1] This principle, I believe, should be followed not only with respect to worldly substance, but also with reference to spiritual desires: every one should covet the same thing, and pursue the good of obedience rather than the accomplishment of his own will. If Christ came not to do His own will,[2] as the gospel testifies, but the will of the Father, how much more should a monk do, not his own will, but that of Christ — not slothful in God's work, but diligent; not regarding so much what is commanded as how he may perform what is commanded, lest in any way the evil of murmuring should grow in any.[3] If certain of God's people perished in the wilderness because of the sin of murmuring,[4] by how much greater a spiritual vengeance shall a monk of a monastery be smitten, if he does not fear to accustom his mind to the evil of murmuring!

## 11. TO ARNO, ARCHBISHOP OF SALZBURG

*Ep.* 107, written 798 (?)

Do you, O concordant brother, have always in mind the eternal days, and run with patience the course which Christ

[1] Cf. Acts 4. 32.
[2] Cf. John 6. 38.
[3] This suggests the Benedictine Rule, chap. 5.
[4] Cf. Num. 14. 2, 29; 26. 64, 65; 1 Cor. 10. 10.

set before you,[1] seeing that he who follows Him walks not in darkness, but shall have the light of life.[2] Let Him be to you food and drink, love and glory. Let not worldly ambition subvert your heart, neither the blandishments of flatterers, nor the shows of vanity, nor the fear of the powerful, nor the threats of the cruel; but build your house on the solid rock, from which no storms can drag you. Stand unmoved, despising the tongues of slanderers, and caring naught for the speech of flatterers. And lead with you into this state of life, by the aid of heavenly grace, as many as you can, using prayers, admonitions, chastenings, and examples; that so you may appear in the sight of the Lord your God with manifold fruit of your labor, being thus rendered worthy of a manifold reward.

## 12. TO CHARLEMAGNE

*Ep.* 170, written September or October, 801

Blessed is the nation for whom the divine clemency has provided so pious and prudent a ruler! Happy the people which is ruled by a wise and pious prince; as the Platonic proverb says:[3] 'Those states would be happy where either philosophers — that is, lovers of wisdom — should reign, or kings should devote themselves to philosophy.' With that no wisdom in the world can be compared. This it is which exalts him of low degree, makes glorious him who is already powerful, and is praiseworthy in all; in this is the ornament and beauty of the present life, and the glory of perpetual bliss. That only is true wisdom which renders blessed the days that never end.

[1] Cf. Heb. 12. 1. [2] Cf. John 8. 12.

[3] Probably derived from Boethius, *De Cons. Phil.* 1, pr. 4; cf. Plato, *Rep.* 5. 473. Two years earlier Alcuin had written to Charlemagne (*Ep.* 110): 'Perhaps a new Athens shall be brought to pass in France, only far superior to the old.' Alcuin again refers to Plato, *Epp.* 240, 241.

I have always recognized it as my privilege, my lord David,[1] to love and to commend to others this your highest preoccupation. You have striven to incite all men to learn it, nay, to prevail upon them with rewards and honors; and have endeavored to bring together from various parts of the world those who loved this wisdom, in order to enlist them as helpers in your own beneficent purpose. In which number you took pains to receive me also from the furthest confines of Britain, though the lowest bond-slave of this sacred wisdom. Would that I were as useful a servant in the house of God as I am prompt in obeying your will!

## 13. TO EANBALD II, ARCHBISHOP OF YORK

*Ep.* 173, written 801, after April 5

Do not meditate flight, but fix your hopes upon the crown.[2] Stand valiantly in the front rank as a standard-bearer of Christ's camp. If the standard-bearer flees, what shall the army do? If the trumpet is silent in the camp, who shall prepare himself to the battle?[3] If the general is fearful, how shall the common soldier be saved? 'Ye have not yet resisted unto blood,' says the apostle;[4] ye have forgotten your consolation; God chastens every son whom He receives. The son must not be cast down because of the chastening of his father's kindness. 'The wicked gnasheth upon the just with his teeth,' says the Scripture;[5] 'but the Lord shall break their teeth,'[6] and shall bring their violence to naught. Read diligently how the old Mattathias,[7] when his death was now at hand, exhorted his sons to play the men, and to fight valiantly against the enemies of God; how the saints have been crowned through

[1] See note 1, p. 272.
[2] Cf. Rev. 2. 10.
[3] Cf. 1 Cor. 14. 8.
[4] Cf. Heb. 12. 4 ff.
[5] Cf. Ps. 37. 12.
[6] Cf. Ps. 58. 6.
[7] 1 Macc. 2. 49 ff.

tribulations; and how small — or rather, how naught — is the glory of the sinner. . . .

But there is no need to make long search for illustrations from ancient times, when those of the present will suffice. You yourself have seen how the kings [1] and princes have perished who arrayed themselves against your predecessors [2] and against the Church of Christ.

ALBERT S. COOK

## SELECTIONS FROM THE BENEDICTINE RULE

Perhaps it is hardly too much to say that no literary production since the time of the apostles has contributed so much to Western civilization as the Benedictine Rule; and yet its author probably never regarded it as a literary production at all.

'Benedict of Nursia was born near Rome at the end of the fifth century. When a boy of fourteen he renounced the world, and after many changes of abode, finally settled at Monte Cassino, and became the founder of that famous monastery [529 A.D.], destroying the temple of Apollo that stood on its site. Benedict died in 543 A.D. Pope Gregory the Great (594–604), the first real organizer among the popes, pressed the monks into the service of the Church. It was the Rule of Benedict that he chose for his guidance, imposing it on a monastery that he himself had founded in Rome. By the time of Charlemagne (768–814), Benedict's Rule seems to have superseded all others. It afterwards became the basis of new orders, chief among which were Cluny and Citeaux. In the thirteenth century the Benedictines were superseded in great part by the mendicant orders, the Franciscans and Dominicans. From the fourteenth century on, they were famous more for their learning than for their piety. The famous Congregation of St. Maur, founded in 1618, was a congregation of Benedictines, and to them we owe the editing of many most valuable historical

[1] Ælfwald, King of Northumbria, d. September 23, 788; Æthelred, April 18, 796.

[2] Albert (767–778) and Eanbald I (778–796).

sources. . . . The monks are still famous for their classical learning.'[1]

Elsewhere we are told: 'They were the only scholars of the Middle Ages; it was they who copied, and by this means preserved for posterity, the greater number of the literary masterpieces of Greece and Rome.'

In Montalembert's *Monks of the West* the achievements of the Benedictines are set forth with admirable vigor and lucidity; see especially Book IV. Monte Cassino, near Naples, the first Benedictine monastery, continues to be a shrine of pilgrimage for high-minded persons of all faiths; see, for example, Longfellow's *Monte Cassino*, and Andrew D. White's recent *Autobiography* (New York, 1905), 2. 417–8. It now contains an interesting series of frescoes, executed by monks of Benediktbeuren in Bavaria, representing scenes in the traditional life of the founder. The present abbot is an American, P. Bonifazio Krug.

For an analysis and estimate of the Rule, see *Encycl. Brit.* 16. 704 ff.

## 1. THE FOUR KINDS OF MONKS

### Chap. 1

It is evident that there are four kinds of monks. The first is that of the Cenobites, who live in a monastery, warring under one rule or one abbot. The second is that of the Anchorites or Hermits. These, not in the fervor of a recent conversion, but by a long test in a monastery, having learned, by the aid of many others, to contend against the devil; having been trained in the ranks of their brethren for the single combats of the desert, and being strong enough to dispense with the assistance of others, are able, God helping them, to fight with their single hand and arm against the vices of the flesh and of their thoughts. The third kind, which is indeed detestable, is that of the Sarabaites. These, having been tested by no rule, nor under the direction of a master as gold is tried

[1] Henderson, *Select Historical Documents of the Middle Ages*, pp. 267–8.

in the furnace[1] — nay, rather, having been softened like lead — show by their works that they keep faith with the world, and that their tonsure is a lie in the sight of God. One may see them shutting themselves up by twos and threes, or even singly, with no shepherd, not in their Lord's sheepfolds, but in their own. They have no law but the satisfaction of their desires, for whatever they think or wish they call holy, and whatever they do not care for they regard as unlawful.[2] The fourth kind of monks is that which is called Vagabonds (*Gyrovagi*). These spend their whole life in passing from one province to another, staying three or four days in each monastery, always wandering and never fixed, the slaves of their passions and addicted to the pleasures of the table, in all things worse than the Sarabaites. But it is better to pass over in silence the wretched conduct of such monks than to say more about them.

## 2. CONCERNING BRETHREN WHO ARE SICK

### Chap. 36

Before all and above all, care shall be taken of the sick, and they shall be served as if they were Christ in person. He Himself has said: 'I was sick, and ye visited me,'[3] and again: 'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.'[4] On the other hand, let the sick consider that it is to the honor of God that they are being served, and let them not annoy by unnecessary demands their brethren who serve them. Yet they are to be borne with in patience, since on their

[1] Cf. 1 Pet. 1. 7; Rev. 3. 18.

[2] We are reminded of the inscription for Rabelais's imaginary Abbey of Theleme: 'Do as you please.' [3] Matt. 25. 36. [4] *Ibid.*

account one gains a greater recompense. Let the abbot see to it then, with all diligence, that they suffer from no neglect. A room by itself shall be set apart for the sick brethren, and for their service a brother who is God-fearing, diligent, and careful. Baths shall be offered to the sick as often as it is expedient; but to the healthy, and especially the young, they shall be allowed less frequently. Even the use of meat shall be granted to the sick and to those who are really weak, in order to repair their strength; but as soon as they are restored, they shall return to their abstinence from meat. The abbot shall do his utmost endeavor that the cellarer and the nurse show no neglect to the sick, since he is responsible for any fault committed by his subordinates.

### 3. THE MEASURE OF FOOD

#### Chap. 39

For the daily meal, as well at the sixth as at the ninth hour, we believe that two cooked dishes are sufficient for each table, having regard to the infirmities of various ones, since he who can not eat of the one may make his meal off the other. In this way, two cooked dishes shall suffice for the brethren, a third being added of fruits or tender vegetables, if they can be had. A full pound of bread is to suffice for a day, whether there be only one meal, or dinner and supper. On the days when there is supper, the cellarer shall reserve a third of the pound for supper. If any unusual labor is undertaken, it shall be in the power and will of the abbot to add somewhat, if it seems expedient, taking care always to prevent excess, so that the monk may never be seized with indigestion, for nothing is so contrary to the character of any Christian

whatever as excess in eating, according to the word of our Lord: 'Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting.'[1] As to the younger boys, they are not to have the same quantity of food as the older ones, moderation being observed in all things. Every one shall wholly abstain from the flesh of quadrupeds, exception being made only in the case of the very weak and of the sick.

### 4. LABOR AND READING

#### Chap. 48

Idleness is the enemy of the soul. At certain times, therefore, the brethren are to be occupied in manual labor, while at other stated hours they are to apply themselves to reading about divine things. On this account we think it incumbent upon us to regulate the twofold division of the day as follows. From Easter until the first day of October the brethren shall go out early in the morning, and work at what may be needful from the first hour till the fourth, while from the fourth hour till the sixth shall be devoted to reading. After the sixth hour, having risen from table, they shall rest on their beds in perfect silence; if any one wishes to read, he is to read to himself, and not disturb any one else. Nones shall be a little advanced, to the middle of the eighth hour; then they shall return to the assigned task till vespers. If the necessity of the place, or poverty, require that the brethren employ themselves with gathering crops, let them not be cast down; for when they live by the work of their hands they are truly monks, like our fathers and the apostles. Let everything be done with moderation, however, because of the weak-hearted. From the first

[1] Lk. 21. 34.

day of October till the beginning of Lent they shall give themselves to reading till the end of the second hour. When the second hour is over, terce shall be said, after which they shall all busy themselves with the prescribed labor till nones. At the first stroke of nones, every one shall quit his work, and be ready for the second stroke. After the meal they shall devote themselves to reading or to the Psalms. During Lent they shall read from early morning until the end of the third hour, and shall then busy themselves with the prescribed labor till the end of the tenth hour. In this season of Lent every one shall receive a book from the library, which he shall read through consecutively; these books are to be given out at the beginning of Lent. Above all, let care be taken to delegate one or two of the elders, who shall go through the monastery at the hours which the brethren give to reading, in order to see if there be not found some listless brother who is idle, or engaged in trifling conversation, instead of being intent upon reading, in this way not only injuring himself but interrupting others. If such a one is caught — which God forbid! — he shall be admonished once and twice. If he does not amend, he shall be subjected to regular punishment in such a way as to intimidate the rest. One brother shall not join another at unreasonable hours. On Sunday the brethren shall all engage in reading, with the exception of those who are employed in various duties. If any one should prove so negligent that he either will not or can not read or meditate, some task shall be set him which he can perform, that he be not idle. To sick or delicate brethren there shall be assigned such an occupation or handicraft as shall keep them out of idleness, but shall not weigh them down with excess of labor, lest they run away.

### 5. ARTIFICERS IN A MONASTERY

Chap. 57

If there are artificers in a monastery, they are to ply their arts with all humility and reverence, if so the abbot allow.[1] But if any of them grows vain on account of his knowledge of the art, as if he were conferring a benefit upon the monastery, he shall be removed from the practice of his art, and shall not again resume it unless he humble himself, and again receive a command to that effect from the abbot. If anything made by the artisans is to be sold, let them look well to it that those through whose hands the articles pass commit no fraud upon the monastery. Let them be mindful of Ananias and Sapphira,[2] lest the death which these suffered in their bodies, they, and all who practise deception with reference to the goods of the monastery, should experience in their souls. Let not the evil of avarice creep into the price for which articles are sold, but on the contrary let the price be always a little lower than that charged by secular persons, that in all things God may be glorified.

### 6. RANK IN THE COMMUNITY

Chap. 63

The brethren shall observe their degrees in the monastery, according as the date of their conversion or the merits of their life shall determine, or as the abbot shall

[1] This was the spirit which, as Ruskin says (*Seven Lamps of Architecture: Lamp of Power*, end), 'once lighted with white lines of cloisters the glades of the Alpine pine, and raised into ordered spires the wild rocks of the Norman sea; which gave to the temple gate the depth and darkness of Elijah's Horeb cave; and lifted, out of the populous city, gray cliffs of lonely stone, into the midst of sailing birds and silent air.'

[2] Cf. Acts 5. 1 ff.

decree. However, the abbot is not to sow trouble in the flock committed to him, nor make unjust arrangements, as if his power might be arbitrarily exercised. Let him rather reflect continually on the account that he shall render to God for all his judgments and all his deeds. According to the order which he has determined, or which the brethren have observed, they shall go to the pax and to the communion, begin the Psalms, and take their places in the choir. No account shall anywhere be made of age in a decision as to rank, since Samuel[1] and Daniel,[2] while still boys, judged their elders. Except those, then, whom, as we have said, the abbot shall have advanced or degraded for good and sufficient reasons, the brethren shall be arranged according to the time of their conversion. For example, he who arrived at the monastery at the second hour of the day, whatever his age or dignity, must know that his place is below him who came at the first hour. . . . The younger are to honor their elders, and the elder to love the younger. When they speak to one another, no one shall call another merely by his name, but the elder shall give the younger the name of brothers, and the younger shall give the elder that of *nonni*, which denotes the respect due to a father. The abbot, being regarded as standing in the place of Jesus Christ, shall be called Master and Abbot, not because he makes such a claim, but through honor and love for Christ. Let him reflect on this, and show himself worthy of such honor. Wherever the brethren meet, the younger shall ask a blessing of the elder. When an elder passes, the younger shall rise and give him a seat, nor shall he presume to sit down unless his elder bid him, so that it may be fulfilled as it is written, 'In honor

[1] Cf. 1 Sam. 3. 15 ff.

[2] Cf. Dan. 4. 27.

preferring one another.'[1] Boys, whether younger or older, shall keep their due places without confusion in the oratory and at table. But with these exceptions, wherever they are, they shall be under the charge and oversight of the brethren until they attain the age of discretion.

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[1] Rom. 12. 10.

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